THEORETICAL AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

OCTOBER 1969

Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

FERGUS NICHOLSON — STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

LOUIS ALTHUSSER — HOW TO READ MARX'S "CAPITAL"

DOCUMENT:

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DISCUSSION:

MIKE PRIOR — BRITISH YOUTH IN REVOLT

B. E. LEONARD — MARXISM AND SCIENCE

Monthly 2/6d

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Marxism Today

Vol. 13 No. 10

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Central Books Ltd.,
37 Gray's Inn Road,
London, W.C.1

Subscription rates
Six issues 17s. 6d.
Twelve issues 35s.

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Editorial Comments

WE join with millions of people throughout the world in mourning the death of Ho Chi Minh, President of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, outstanding Marxist leader of his people and veteran Communist.

Ho Chi Minh embodied the indestructible will of the Vietnamese people for freedom, independence and social advance. Under his leadership they have demonstrated that this will is more powerful than all the sophisticated and terrible weaponry that the Americans have hurled against them. Under his leadership and of the Marxist Party which he founded and inspired, the Vietnamese people have displayed miracles of heroism and endurance. They have inflicted defeat after defeat on the most powerful military machine in the capitalist world and faced an onslaught the like of which has not been suffered by any other people in the world.

Capitalist commentators are busily speculating on Ho's death leading to divisions and weaknesses in the ranks of the Vietnamese people from which they may profit. Of one thing we can be certain. The Vietnamese people will honour Ho's memory with an even more determined struggle to achieve all that Ho lived and worked for—a free and independent Vietnam, the advance to socialism in Vietnam and throughout the world.

The TUC

Despite all the efforts by the Press to present the 101st Trades Union Congress at Portsmouth as quiet and undramatic it was perhaps one of the most historic Congresses, certainly since the war. It marked an important advance in consolidating the left trend within the trade union movement which has been developing during the last few years as a result of the gradual but solid forging of a united left. It recorded important decisions incorporating the demands of the left on almost all issues, home and foreign. The Congress was dominated by a new emerging left leadership, in particular Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon, who are being acknowledged as the spokesmen representing the views held by the overwhelming majority of the organised workers. What made it appear a quiet Congress was that the right wing were in disarray, had lost their arrogance and didn't feel adequate to face the challenge of the left. The only spokesman of the right opposing the demand for the total repeal of the Prices and Incomes Act,—the major debate of the Congress—was Lord Cooper, and what a weak effort he made. It was the speech of a beaten man.

Unlike previous Congresses a new feature was the stress laid from the rostrum by Vic Feather, Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones on the vital and most important role of shop stewards and that "real power rested at the shop floor and not at Whitehall or even Congress House." Les Cannon was almost the lone vocal champion of the Right and was hoist with his own petard when in opposition to his vicious resolution on Czechoslovakia, an amendment which in essence called for the resumption of relations with the trade unions of the Warsaw Pact countries, was carried.

This Congress laid the basis for the development of a mass movement for the policies of the left. The old obstacle to the development of such a movement, namely the dead hand of Congress House, if not already removed is certainly on the road to disappearing.

African National Congress

At the end of April delegates from the branches of the African National Congress of South Africa, units of its military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe and leaders of the Indian and Coloured peoples and revolutionary working-class movement, met in Dar-es-Salaam for a Consultative Conference.

Its deliberations have reinforced the movement politically and organisationally for the intensification of the armed struggle and for extended activity for international support at this stage of its fight for liberation. A new organisational structure was adopted establishing a Presidential Council and a Revolutionary Council.

The main document presented to the Conference outlined the general balance of world forces and in detail discussed imperialist tactics in regard to the newly independent states and the liberation movement.

It specified such measures as military coups, price fixing of the main products on the world markets, and economic aid which increases dependency on the capitalist world as some of the ways in which neo-colonialism is established.

Its tactics towards the movements still struggling for independence consists in all forms of support and co-operation with South Africa, the pillar of the Caetano-Smith-Vorster Alliance, and for the other two countries of Portugal and Rhodesia. The assassination of leaders, splits and divisions generated in the ranks and leadership of the movements, and setting up of stooge organisations and propaganda through radio and the press to sow

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confusion and discouragement among the forces for independence.

These are the methods of desperation and the Conference clearly taking them into account, nevertheless expressed its confidence in the ability of the anti-imperialist forces to overcome them. It made an appeal for every effort to consolidate the unity of the Socialist camp, whose present disunity is reflected in the mass anti-imperialist organisations, and holding back the struggle for liberation.

The movement sees a long and bitter struggle ahead in Southern Africa for which it is prepared and it looks for growing understanding and support from the working-class and progressive movement in the imperialist countries themselves:

> "The international support for our struggle against the South African fascists has been mounting. But misconceptions and even ignorance of the conditions in our country and the struggle are still there in the most unexpected quarters.
>
> This is sometimes due to the fact that the enemy and its allies are busy through a well-organised internationally pro-Apartheid lobby, distorting and lying about the situation in the country. It is of course correct that action inside our country is a more positive and dynamic contribution towards the struggle against imperialism. But the action itself and constant international explanation and agitation must go hand in hand. It is not necessary to go into details of how the so-called "Mau-Mau" struggle was slandered and isolated by the British to the extent that it was not understood and not effectively supported by the international progressive world for lack of proper publicity. Much harm resulted from this circumstance. Karl Marx's call "Workers of the World Unite" is equally applicable to the anti-imperialists at this grave and critical time, "Anti-imperialists of the World Unite!"

Formation of the British Socialist Party

We would warmly recommend to our readers the study of the latest two facsimile reprints issued by the Communist Party.[1] These are the Report of the Socialist Unity Conference held at Salford at the end of September 1911, and the Report of the First Annual Conference of the British Socialist Party held in Manchester in May 1912.

The last years before the First World War were marked in Britain by widespread industrial struggles (known as "The Great Unrest") and at the same time an upsurge of socialist political activity.

But there was both division and overlapping in the socialist forces. In 1911 the main Marxist organisation in Britain was the Social-Democratic Party, a continuation of the Social-Democratic Federation founded in 1883. But there was also the Independent Labour Party, non-Marxist, but vigorous in its socialist propaganda, and with considerable support for Marxism within some of its Branches. Indeed, a whole number of SDP and ILP branches had long worked together.

Once again the pressing need arose for a new initiative for socialist unity. The Rochdale Conference of the SDP held in 1910, decided on such an initiative, and invitations to a Unity Conference were sent out to the ILP, Fabian Society, Clarion Cycling Clubs, and a whole range of independent local socialist societies. The ILP and Fabian Society refused to participate on a national basis, but a whole number of ILP Branches and Fabian groups accepted.

Finally at the end of September 1911 the Unity Conference met, attended by 220 delegates—including 85 from branches of the SDP, 41 ILP Branches, 32 Clarion Clubs and Fellowships and 50 diverse local socialist societies. The British Socialist Party (BSP) was formed.

Some of the debates at the Unity Conference are both, in a sense, extremely topical and also most important for understanding the background and internal tensions with the British Left.

One of the main resolutions, moved by Harry Quelch in the name of the Executive Council of the Social-Democratic Party, formulated the aims of the new Party about to be formed. The Socialist Party, the resolution stated:

> "though striving for the realisation of immediate socialist reforms demanded by the working class, is not a reformist but a revolutionary party, which recognises that social freedom and equality can only be won by fighting the class war through to the finish, and thus abolishing for ever all class distinctions."

One group of delegates from the Clarion Cycling Club, with quite considerable support from SDP and ILP Branches wanted to delete all reference to class war as narrowing the appeal of the new organisation. In contrast, another group (including the delegates of the Woolwich ILP and of the Southport Fabian Society) demanded the deletion of all reference to the struggle for immediate social reforms. They vehemently opposed "long lists of absurd palliatives", and any "tinkering with the present situation". It is interesting that whilst the amendment to delete the class struggle was lost by a large majority, the amendment to delete work for immediate reforms was carried by 85 to 77.

---

[1] *Official Report of the Socialist Unity Conference held at Caxton Hall, Salford, on September 30th and October 1st, 1911.*

and

The First Annual Conference of the British Socialist Party held in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, on May 25th-27th, 1912.

Available from Central Books Ltd. at 10s. 6d. and 21s. respectively.

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Of similar interest, and very relevant today, was the extremely hot debate on the relative importance of and relation between political and industrial struggles.

Red Toffee

The first Annual Conference of the British Socialist Party was held within seven months of the Unity Conference.

Once again there was an important debate on industrial and political policy. A resolution moved in the name of the National Executive Committee demanding the enfranchisement of women and supporting the women's struggle for the suffrage was heatedly discussed but *not* carried.

Extremely interesting was the discussion on "socialism and patriotism" based on a paper by Harry Quelch which had been distributed to the delegates. Socialists, said Quelch, were *internationalists not anti-nationalists:*

> "He was a socialist because he did not believe that socialism meant the suppression of all individual liberty, but the establishment of a condition of things in which the fullest possible individual liberty would exist, and the greatest opportunities would be afforded for the development of the individual. So also international socialism claimed the fullest possible liberty for every individual nationality".

There was a discussion on finance that will seem familiar to militants of successive socialist organisations. How could the Party be financed? In the long history of British socialism there have been many and diverse attempts to answer this difficult and permanent question.

The delegate from West Leeds thought that he had found the long-sought solution. In Leeds, by the manufacture and sale of toffee and chocolates, they had succeeded in contributing regularly more than £3 14s. 0d. weekly to the Party funds:

> "If 300 of the 370 Branches of the Party were to take and dispose of a gross of Red Flag Toffee weekly . . ."

Alas, red toffee notwithstanding, the problem still remains with us.

Socialist Democracy

The question of deepening socialist democracy was touched on several times in the report of Nicolae Ceausescu to the 10th Congress of the Romanian Communist Party, held at Bucharest in August of this year.

He spoke of it once in the context of a consideration of the role of the state in Romania today. Its role necessarily changes, he said, after the abolition of the exploiting classes, and it will go on changing:

> "In the course of building a multilaterally developed socialist society, of creating the prerequisites for transition to communism, the functions of the state will change still more, its internal activities being concentrated on organising production, scientific and cultural life."

He warned against the dangers of bureaucracy:

> "We must warn against the danger to the good functioning of the state apparatus, to the development of the economy, culture and to the whole of public life, contained in tendencies of red tape which could lead towards a divorce from the broad mass of the people, to the appearance of social contradictions profoundly harmful to the interests of socialist construction."

What is needed, he insisted, was that:

> "We should more and more strengthen control by public opinion over the activity of leading state bodies at all levels. We should see to it that the state does not turn into an organisation above classes, above society, but that, on the contrary, it integrates itself organically—if you can put it thus —into socialist society. This requires that all leading bodies of the state should be an emanation of the masses, should carry on their activity in close union with the people."

He emphasised the importance of criticism. In essence, he said, the problem of development of socialist democracy is that of the active participation of the people in running the country's affairs. And, he continued:

> "Of special importance is the stimulation of constructive criticism by the masses of the shortcomings in state, economic and socio-cultural life. . . . Let us not allow criticism and self-criticism to turn into mere formality! Constructive criticism of negative phenomena, of practices that are alien to our society, does not undermine socialist power, does not weaken the foundation of the new system; on the contrary, it is a guarantee of our advance, of the steady perfecting of the management and organisation of socialist society."

The Tudeh Party of Iran

There has not been much news recently about the struggle of the opposition, progressive and Socialist movement in Iran. The First Secretary of the Tudeh Party of Iran recently published an article about his country in *Horizont*, a weekly paper published in the German Democratic Republic, from which we take the following interesting extracts.

At the present time what is characteristic of Iran is its capitalist development . . . the ruling circles have enabled imperialist monopolies to

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increase their investments and to get a stranglehold on the country through loans and credits, to a greater degree than ever.

In recent years the Socialist countries, the Soviet Union above all, have made valuable contributions to the development of industry, especially heavy industry. Long-term credits at low interest rates from these sources have made it possible to develop a heavy industry within Iran's State sector. The Shah, instead of utilising these developments for advancing the economic independence of the country, had continued to permit the exploitation of Iran's resources and home market by the imperialist monopolies. The country is virtually controlled by ten thousand American "advisers", and all this has led to a great growth of dissatisfaction and hatred amongst the people of Iran.

The increasing indignation of the people against the home and foreign policies of the Iranian rulers is reflected in the following examples:

Last year students in the universities of Teheran, Tabriz and Schira struck against the regime of terror and the intolerable material and intellectual conditions prevailing in these institutions. The regime answered by expelling many of the strikers from the university, conscripting them into the army, or by arresting and imprisoning them sometimes trying them before military tribunals.

Iranian students abroad have increased their political activities. Last year there were likewise constant strikes in factories in Teheran, Isafan, and also by workers in the oil industry situated in Southern Iran, some of which ended in victories for the strikers.

The struggle of the Kurds in Iran against the regime has been intensified recently. Fifty patriots were killed in recent bloody clashes, hundreds arrested and thrown into prison. The struggle is continuing.

Economic and political developments, the constantly increasing influence of foreign capital and the agrarian reform are bringing about significant changes in Iran's social structure. While one part of the national bourgeoisie joins forces with the compradores, other sections support the anti-imperialist and democratic struggle. The number of peasants, of casual and agricultural workers for whom the agrarian reform is of no benefit at all, increases daily. The majority of wage workers is recruited from workers in towns and villages with the industrial workers acting as a driving force.

Alongside intellectuals who have made their peace with the regime, there are other new, intellectual sections, who come out for social, economic and political reform. They are constantly establishing close ties with the working class.

These changes in the social struggle of our country, are leading to the consolidation of the social basis of the opposition forces and of the Tudeh Party.

British Foreign Policy and its Critics

A few years ago Andrew Rothstein was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Moscow, and on that occasion delivered three lectures on British Foreign Policy to a crowded audience of students. These have now been published by Lawrence & Wishart.[3]

This extremely readable and stimulating book presents a new angle on its subject by examining policies which led to two world wars through the mirror of the opposition put up to them. In the three chapters which follow an introductory chapter on "Britain and the World", Andrew Rothstein deals fully with the opposition put up in Britain by three outstanding and honest men, none of them Communists or Marxists, incidentally: Wilfrid Scawan Blunt, E. D. Morel and Robert Dell. These three names may not at this date mean much at first to many readers—but they will after reading a few pages of this book.

Andrew Rothstein's lectures, which portrayed with crystal clarity the imperialist motivations of British policy and at the same time showed how it has been and should be opposed, are of the greatest interest and value. British students even more than Russian ones will profit by them.

Lenin-Engels-Owen

The first British book for the centenary of Lenin's birth, which occurs in 1970, has now been published by Lawrence & Wishart—a one-volume selection of Lenin's key political writings, over 900 pages bound in hard covers at 30s.[4]

There have been in the past several editions of Lenin's *Selected Works*, all of them in several volumes. This single-volume edition, much easier to handle and to study, is an excellent addition to our basic literature, and makes a companion to the one-volume *Selected Works of Marx and Engels* published by Lawrence & Wishart earlier in the year.

At the same time, a new edition (price 21s.) of Engels's *Anti-Dühring* is now on sale. This work has been out of print for some months.

[3] *British Foreign Policy and its Critics, 1830-1950* by Andrew Rothstein. Lawrence & Wishart, 21s.

[4] Lenin, *Selected Works*, Lawrence & Wishart, 30s.; Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Lawrence & Wishart, 21s.; *The Life and Ideas of Robert Owen*, by A. L. Morton, Lawrence & Wishart, 12s. 6d.

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Very welcome too is the paperback edition (12s. 6d.) published by Lawrence & Wishart in August of A. L. Morton's *Life and Ideas of Robert Owen*. Most socialists have read about Robert Owen, few indeed have read him. This paperback contains a comprehensive selection from Owen's writings on a variety of topics, ranging from trade unionism and co-operation to Owen's utopian dreams of ideal socialist communities, together with a brilliant introduction by the author of *A People's History of England*.

History of the Communist Party—Vol. Two

The second volume of James Klugmann's *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain* was published by Lawrence & Wishart on September 25.[5]

The first three chapters of this volume deal with the General Strike of 1926—its preparation, the strike itself, and the aftermath. There follow two further chapters, one reviewing the Communist Party's leading role in the fight against imperialism and war at that period, and one on the problems of Party organisation.

The Communist Party, together with the Minority Movement, played a part to be proud of in the great battles of the General Strike. Of course mistakes were made, as we can see now clearly enough, and James Klugmann duly draws attention to them all. But to the question—Who gave the right lead and fought right through for victory and against betrayal?—the facts return only one answer: the Communist Party.

This volume contains, moreover, much more than an account of the Communist Party's policies and activities. In it will be found the most complete account yet rendered of the whole activity of the British working class in those momentous days.

Poems of Revolt

It is good that the Labour Research Department has reprinted the anthology of "Poems of Revolt", edited by Joan Beauchamp, and originally published in 1924.[6]

Joan Beauchamp was well known to earlier generations of the labour and trade union movement. As a young woman she was active in the women's suffrage struggle working with Sylvia Pankhurst in the Women's Suffrage Federation and with Mrs. Despard in the Women's Freedom League.

In World War I she worked with the No-Conscription Fellowship and helped to edit its organ *The Tribunal*.

She joined the Communist Party on its foundation in 1920, and right through the 'twenties and 'thirties was active in many ways—in the Labour Research Department, League against Imperialism, Russia Today Society, *Labour Monthly*. She produced two important books for the LRD—*British Imperialism in India* (1935) and *Women Who Work* (1937).

She puts as it were as a motto for her anthology the lines of Burns that burn with truth today:

> "Here's freedom to him that wad read!
> Here's freedom to him that wad write!
> There's nane ever feared that the truth should be heard
> But they wham the truth wad indite."

The anthology was designed to choose contemporary or comparatively contemporary poems of revolt, culled from the period just before, during, and immediately after the war. It was a "twentieth century anthology", and naturally enough poems against imperialism and war tend to dominate.

Here are Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, Padroic Pearse and James Stephen. There are poets of whom some of today's readers will probably be unaware—Patrick Macgill, for instance (from *Songs of a Navvy*) and James Welsh (from *Songs of a Miner*).

There are poems from authors who are little known today *as poets* like W. N. Ewer and Margaret Postgate.

But all in all most of the poems have kept their warmth and passion, and we should be glad that they are once again so readily available.

Incidentally, it is high time that there was a full-scale anthology of radical and socialist political and social poetry. We are informed by Lawrence & Wishart that they have one in preparation to be edited by Mary Ashraf and to cover the whole history of political poetry in Britain.

Mrs. Ashraf has asked us to appeal to our readers to send in suggestions of "what poems or songs, old or new, well known or otherwise, should be included."

She would be particularly grateful to hear of poems "serious, satirical, humorous—that have appeared in pamphlets, journals, local newspapers, etc. which may not have come our way or may long be out of print." What she wants is "poetry

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[5] *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain, 1925-1926: the General Strike*, by James Klugmann, Lawrence & Wishart, 70s.

[6] "Poems of Revolt": an Anthology chosen by Joan Beauchamp, Labour Research Department, 7s. 6d.

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on themes of working-class life, politics, trade unionism, etc. which reflect in one way or another the local or international class struggle past and present, poems that help us to appreciate what has been done and what must still be done."

Perhaps our readers can help.

Death of H. D. Dickinson

Maurice Dobb writes: "The recent death of H. D. Dickinson, retired Professor of Economics at Bristol, will be a loss to students in that subject and especially to socialist students. My first memory of him is as Secretary of the Cambridge University Socialist Society when I sought him out in my first student term in order to sign on (after a somewhat critical inspection he accepted me as a member). I recall that he then had a slightly hunted look; and with some reason since a few months before he had suffered a ducking in the river by ex-officer students who had broken up a socialist meeting and seized him as a victim (it was the year after the end of World War I).

"I later remember him both in the University Socialist Federation and at national student summer schools, always in theoretical questions taking an individual dissenting line (he never could stomach the labour theory of value, leaning towards the Austrian School of Utility; although he believed in historical materialism, teaching it to his students, and also in surplus value, on which he wrote a book called *Institutional Revenue* to show how he thought it could be stated in terms of a utility-theory of value). In the economists' debate of the inter-war period about socialism, he was the first in this country to propound (in answer to Hayek and Mises) a 'decentralised scheme' for combining market with planning—something not without interest today in view of recent discussion of such questions in socialist countries. This he later expanded, in 1939, into a book on *The Economics of Socialism.*

"But despite this interest in a market mechanism, he was a great believer in economic planning, paid visits to the Soviet Union in the 1930s, and sentimentally celebrated the anniversaries of the 'October Revolution.' In later years he made a special study of the early 19th century German economist von Thünen, whose work he translated. Almost my last memory of him was addressing the Centenary-of-*Capital* meeting organised by Marx House in Jockeys Fields."

Continued from page 320

allowing for the huge differences in the historical background between the USSR and the USA, it is clear that in those areas of science where priority has been given to research (large-scale engineering projects, space research and preventative medicine for example) the USSR is at least as advanced as the USA. In other areas, particularly in many of the biological sciences, is very much behind because, despite dialectics, the material conditions which are a prerequisite for all scientific advance have not been provided.

Are Dialectics Relevant?

There is no evidence to suggest that, given the same material conditions, a scientist with a knowledge of dialectics would make a more significant contribution than one of equal ability who did not have this knowledge. What determines the value of a piece of research is the capability of the scientist; a good scientist, whether he is a Christian like Coulson or a Marxist like Bernal, realises the limitations of his findings, searches for the interconnections, and in this way goes on developing an ever widening field of human knowledge. Differences between a scientist who is a Marxist and one who is not might arise in other ways of course. It is important, for example, to consider the social implications of scientific research and clearly, to a Marxist, this should be an essential aspect of the work. However, the present discussion is not about the ancillary social aspects of science, important though they may be, but the relevance of dialectics to the natural sciences as such and, at the present time, there would seem to be little relevance. This is not, of course, to say that the situation will remain so in the future.

As Maurice Cornforth says in the conclusion of his article, most of the work still remains to be done in understanding and developing the laws of dialectics. Until such times as we have this deeper understanding of dialectics, caution would seem to be essential in making pronouncements as to the relevance of dialectics to the natural sciences. As Dan Muir so correctly concluded, scientists are not so much anti-philosophical as anti-philosophical-dogmatism. The Lysenko affair in the biological sciences (and similar incidents in the field of chemistry) did a great disservice to Soviet science and have undoubtedly contributed to the present backwardness in genetics in the Soviet Union. By all means let us have the widest possible discussion of the subject for only in this way can its relevance be clarified and our understanding increased but, in keeping with the spirit of the Executive Committee's statement of 1967, on no account must dogmatism be elevated to the position of a principle and a "line" laid down.

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Student Perspectives

Fergus Nicholson

There has of late been such student turbulence in fact and so much more in phantasy that it is difficult but timely to recall that only a few years ago the student body in this country was condemned on all sides as indifferent and apathetic.

In the never-had-it-so-good years of Macmillan, no less than on the eve of Mr. Wilson's technological revolution, students' aspirations and ambitions were absorbed in the status quo. Mr. Butler and Mr. Hogg were accustomed to tell student audiences that they were the new rulers, the meritocratic elite (or, as appropriate, technocratic elite), the top 2 per cent.

It was possible in those days for the Labour Party to sustain a student organisation which operated bans against Communist Party members, and trained candidate fodder for the parliamentary party. The small groups of the sectarian (Trotskyist) left discounted or denied the possibility of a mass progressive student movement.

Of course, even in those dark ages, forms of collective student action were not unknown. During the first few tense days of the crisis precipitated by the United States' blockade of Cuba, most of the immediate protests were college based; in a few colleges strike decisions were taken. Two years later, 5,000 students demonstrated in London against apartheid in South Africa. At various times, students boycotted their college refectories, and several thousand travelled through a blizzard to lobby parliament for higher salaries for teachers.

In that period the student unions and representative councils locally and nationally were dominated by a legacy of the cold war, more or less genuine anti-politicalism at college level exploited as a platform for anti-Communist and anti-Soviet leadership in the national unions. Within that framework student grievances got lost in procedure longer than a student lifetime though the most acute would be the subject of a respectful deputation to a junior minister.

Grants—or Lack of Them

This short fall in student activism did not correspond in any obvious way to a problem-free student existence. Admittedly, student grants (for those who received a full grant) were in 1962 substantially higher (in purchasing power) than at the subsequent triennial review in 1965 and 1968. But even then, the grants of students whose parents had a combined income of £14 plus per week were reduced by an amount, referred to as a "parental contribution", which parents were assumed to be giving to their children. "Children" for this purpose, means "under 25". A survey in the largest London college showed that in fact the average student so treated received £2 per week less from his parent than was assumed.

This means test is nothing to the very rich (though it can exclude any independent access to education for their mutinous children) but it hurts most acutely the better-off sections of the working class, those sections of the working class whose children are most likely to have survived the class segregating obstacles of our school systems.

There are, however, a body of full-time students whose needs for food, clothing, shelter and even entertainment are presumably no less, whose situation is even worse. These are students in technical and art colleges doing courses not regarded as equivalent to degrees. They may receive anything or nothing at the discretion of the particular local education authority in whose area they were resident on June 30th before first entering college.

Students were, and are, virtually outside the national insurance system. Although their grants generally are for 30 weeks in the year, they are neither assured of employment nor eligible for unemployment benefit, nor are they eligible for any benefit when ill.

A single case will illustrate this situation. A girl whose parental home was near the south-eastern limit of the Greater London area was studying at the western extremity of Greater London. Because she was studying in the *same* area as her *home*, the local authority would only pay her a grant at the "living at home" rate, whether she moved into digs or travelled two hours each way daily. She became ill and was away from college for many weeks. Living on her grant, she had no claim even for national assistance. After she returned, she was informed by the local authority that she would be required to repay the grant for the period of her absence. Since this would be impossible, they generously agreed to deduct it from her grant for the next session.

A possible reason for the comparative moderation of student response to the financial ill-treatment of students is that those who suffer most never appear as students at all. There is a gap between the end of compulsory school attendance and the beginning of higher education for which substantial main-

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tenance grants are paid, and many, especially working-class children, opt out of education at that point.

The families of those working-class children who do complete secondary education are likely to expect them to be financially independent, even bread-winning members of the family at 18, though the government regards them as dependent until they are 25. Thus, if a student during his course gets married and starts a family (a not outrageous occurrence between 18 and 25) he is refused the additional grant available to students who are already married a few months before they begin study.

Niggardly

Rarely remarked is the extreme niggardliness of our authorities towards the substantial sections of our student population who come from other countries. Britain is mean compared even to the other developed capitalist countries of Europe. But the real contrast is with the socialist countries.

The Soviet Union at its formation accepted responsibility for a legacy of educational backwardness in the colonial territories of the Tzarist Empire, worse if anything than that in the British Empire, along with a lower educational level in the metropolitan heartland. Today she has not only discharged that responsibility, but is providing free higher education for many thousands of students from the British Commonwealth and areas dominated by British Imperialism. While a Commonwealth student in London is not normally eligible for a grant, in Moscow he would receive, normally, a higher grant than a Soviet student, because of his added problems in a strange country, and he would also be supported for a year at a preparatory institute to settle in and learn the language.

This contrast is largely unpublicised and so it is understandable that it has evoked little protest. However, on December 21st, 1966, the government took this ill-treatment of foreign students a stage further in a manner so crude as to occasion an irreversible change in the political disposition of the student body in this country.

In response to a written question planted with a back-bench MP, soon to take his first faltering steps on the ministerial ladder, the government announced that in future students from outside Britain would pay fees on a different scale from British students. Where, for example, a British student paid about £70 for university tuition, the Government would expect the universities to charge a foreign student £250. And on that expectation it would, by that amount, reduce its contribution to the university's expenses.

Day of Action

The National Union of Students under a leadership moderate to excess, was prevailed on to organise a lobby of Parliament on February 1st, 1967. However, their kind of lobby was restricted to two lobbyers per college or university. By the efforts of the then newly initiated Radical Student Alliance and of the Co-ordinating Committee of Overseas Student Organisations, this was enlarged to a lobby involving 7,000 students.

These bodies, and many of the student unions especially in the north of England, then took up the call for a Day of Student Action on February 22nd. The National Union of Students issued a succession of conflicting "instructions", finally on the eve, endorsing the Day of Action. This was multiform. Many universities or colleges went on strike or staged boycotts of lectures. Others staged massive sit-ins which in effect cancelled lectures. Elsewhere there were demonstrations. In all, about 170,000 students are known to have taken part in some form of action that day. Nothing like it in scale had ever happened before or has since.

The movement was there, but the organisation was not available. The government announced its pre-packaged concession, an interim hardship fund. In October, the increased fees took effect and remain to this day.

Lacking an organisation with the will and the means to face the authorities at a national level, the student movement, baptised in the battle against increased fees for overseas students, was channelled into a series of mass actions at college level.

Contents of Courses

There is a popular view of student life as a period of leisure and self-indulgence, a view prevalent enough to influence to their cost a small impressionable number of the studying population.

However their courses are wrapped up, almost all students embark on three or more years of full-time study with the expectation that their job situation at the end will be different because of the period of study. Sometimes this is because they learn how to do particular things (e.g. engineering, medicine, teaching) and sometimes just because at the end of the process they are the kind of people for whom firms will pay more as officer material. Most courses combine these elements in different proportions. Nearly all courses are vocational, though this will often be evident to the technology student earlier than to the arts student.

With fewer weeks of instruction in the year than in most countries, within fewer years (especially in England and Wales) than almost any country, the British student has to master subject matter more

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complicated with the advance of technique and time, and with the growth of competition for places.

In a manner which mirrors the structure of class society, there is superimposed on many courses a pattern of examination designed to stamp the finished student indelibly "First Class", "Upper Second Class", "Lower Second Class", "Third Class", "Pass" or "Reject" ("Failed to Satisfy the Examiners", a phrase as humane as "At The Queen's Pleasure").

Students have two wishes about their courses which pull in opposite directions.

On the one hand, they want their courses to be *relevant*, to teach them things which will help them in their work, which will relate to modern society and practice; on the other hand, they want to avoid undue specialisation, they are offended at being programmed for too specific, too narrow a function.

Education for What?

This contradiction appears insoluble within class society.

It is repeated at a different level in the problem of the representation of industry or commerce in college government, and the planning of the provision of places in higher education to meet the needs of the community.

On the face of it, nothing could be more designed to ensure the relevance of modern courses than the presence on college governing bodies of the managers of the real world of business, nor more calculated to ensure that students are not being trained for unemployment, than the provision of places in accordance with the best available national economic plan.

In practice, however, within capitalist society, the organisers and planners of society are at the service of the exploiting class. For them it can easily be more profitable to train a new generation in a new technology than to provide a longer, more broadly based course, and supplement it throughout a graduate's working life. If there are narrowly specialised courses available they will drive out the less specialised by employer preference, and therefore also by student preference.

Similarly, the Department of Education and Science has expanded the provision of specific teacher training places in preference to equivalent degree courses whose graduates would be able to choose on the labour market between teaching and other available employment, taking account of wages and conditions.

Of course, the petty paternalistic tyrannies, restrictions on residence, hours and visiting and the like, coupled with denial of autonomy to organisations of students, do not of themselves put pounds in exploiters' pockets. They have, however, reinforced the subjective weakness of the student body: they have enforced, even on many students themselves, a view of students as the lucky recipients of social and sometimes private charity.

Fight for Representation

Even in quietest spells of student apathy, one could find in almost every instance worse than 90 per cent dissatisfaction with each specific course. But no universal panacea suggests itself. The only visible road to an education, which (even within the present social system) would be more satisfactory to the students, led through democratic college government with effective student representation.

The principle of students not passive in the matter of college government was raised in the London School of Economics in March 1967.

A substantial section of the students at the school took exception to the appointment of Dr. Walter Adams of University College, Rhodesia, to succeed Sir Sidney Caine as Director of the school. At a point in this dispute, the students' union instructed its president, David Adelstein, to write a letter to *The Times*. For doing this, David was threatened with disciplinary action.

Four issues were intermingled: namely, the original objection to Dr. Adams based on his conduct in Salisbury, Rhodesia; the right of the students collectively to some say in the choice of Director and in general in the running of the school; the right of the Students' Union to take its own decisions, including to instruct its officials to speak or write in its name, and finally the whole business of the disciplining of students, the grounds for it and also the quasi judicial procedures.

All the main decisions (including the decision which introduced the "sit-in" to the British student scene) by the students were taken in well-attended general meetings of the students' union. Even so, the union leadership were at pains to circulate all the facts, including lengthy detailed correspondence with the authorities within the School and their friends outside (David Adelstein was one of the initiators of the Radical Student Alliance) circulated the information and secured support from students throughout the country. The dispute ended with a finding by the authorities that David Adelstein was guilty of a technical offence, but had acted in good faith and was not to be penalised.

This action, following on the national mass action on overseas students' fees that February, established the student body as a force to be reckoned with at least at college level, and college authorities began to move to anticipate student

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action, offering consultation before representation could be demanded.

Sit-Ins

Of the many sit-in style actions which followed, that at Leicester University may serve as a good example. The students, through their union, were seeking token representation on a number of university committees. They waited in silent vigil outside a Senate meeting for their reply. When it came, they got nothing. Five days later, another union general meeting decided on mass action, and their President led a sit-in which took over and held the administrative building for three days and nights, abandoning it only to accept a proposal that a committee should be set up to review the whole university government, with six of its twelve members elected by the students. The president at that point in time of the National Union of Students, a Mr. Martin, had appeared only briefly, as a mediator between authorities and students.

By the winter of 1967-68 we could say that there was appearing a problem for the guardians of monopoly capitalism in Britain. A student body was emerging which was capable of developing a fair degree of organisation and power in pursuing its own demands, in actually affecting decisions which concerned students.

Such a body might very well infect the non-student youth and this would be a blow to the capitalist establishment in Britain which has intelligently anticipated and prevented the emergence of any mass democratic youth movements.

More seriously, it would assist and accelerate the tendency of the technocracy of labour, the professional and semi-professional strata, the students grown-up, to act more like (and objectively ally themselves with) the organised working class, as envisaged in *The British Road to Socialism.*

It is not given to us to see how the strategy and tactics of a contemporary ruling and exploiting class are arrived at; but a pattern of behaviour by those most responsive to ruling class needs does emerge and may be studied.

The mass media might have ignored where it could, and where it could not seriously damned all student collective action. College authorities might have avoided battles with their students wherever possible, and elsewhere enforced rules rigorously, and stuck by their decisions.

Television Tactics

Instead, a different pattern emerges during 1968.

The newspapers, radio and television (even occasionally the advertisements) are filled with an outrageous glamorous generation of student militancy, of student revolutionaries. Personalities, leaders, are created by the press in the morning, and interviewed on television in the evening.

The real problems of real students disappear. Of grants declining in value, college principals' arbitrary powers, concern about career prospects or the disappointment at the academic fare provided, less and less is heard. Instead, we have oceans of sociological research into generation gaps, disenchantment retitled alienation and decadence sold as permissiveness: from the instant media, the minutiae of Molotov cocktails.

Revolution, provided it is far removed from British conditions, or else of the spirit rather than the removal of an exploiting class, becomes a marketable commodity and a new image in design.

In May, the voice of the establishment became the arbiter of revolution, as radio and television commentators, journalists daily and weekly, heavy and popular, joined the little sectarian groups, Trotskyist and "Maoist", to proclaim that the Communist Parties in general, that of France in particular, were not real revolutionaries.

In June, the patron of true revolutionaries, the BBC, flew an assortment of revolutionary student leaders into London. No device was spared to lend interest to the occasion. Cohn-Bendit, a German student who had been made prominent in his association with the students actions at the Nanterre annexe of the Paris Sorbonne, and his attacks on the French Communist Party, was top-of-the-bill. Should he be allowed into Britain? Questions in Parliament! Why has he been given a more restricted visa than the other performers? Will they, won't they? Home Office "capitulates" and his visa is extended.

In the supporting cast was a Mr. Ishii, many years absent from Japan as a representative of their student organisation to the International Union of Students in Prague. Through all his years with the IUS Mr. Ishii was unable to obtain a visa to enter Britain. Now as a Trotskyist living in Western Europe, he is flown in to London by the BBC—sparing no expense—as a representative of revolutionary Japanese students.

These two, with an assortment of others were brought to London for their colossal revolutionary student spectacular. With the solicitude normally shown by the Establishment organisations to revolutionaries, the BBC then made this group available en bloc for a teach-in at the London School of Economics on the Thursday evening preceding a non-delegate conference already announced there for the Friday and Saturday, to establish a new revolutionary student body replacing all others. In due course, with due press publicity, the conference took place and set up its organisa-

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tion, which has adopted a manifesto repudiating the existing organisations and parties of the labour movement.

Whatever the subjective intention of individuals, objectively a development encouraged by Establishment organisations has been brought to fruition. Where before there was developing a united student movement, converging with the labour movement, student attention has been diverted to a body committed to support of splinter groups. Young people who might have been reinforcing the left against the right in the labour movement are instead opting out. The battle to unite the student movement with the authentic labour movement has to be tackled from a new angle.

Which Line for the Left?

Two alternative tactical lines are on offer to the student Left. Both assume that student action will begin with what concerns the student most immediately; both suppose that from that beginning will grow a student movement hostile to imperialism/monopoly capitalism in its entirety. Between the beginning and that desired end, the paths diverge.

Do we search for an issue which can be worked up into a *conflict situation*, which we *politicise* partly by incorporating the original, still unrealised demands in an escalating series, making sure that the set is ultimately unattainable within capitalism (or the present *authority structure*) and therefore revolutionary?

Alternatively, do we tackle real problems of real people as they emerge, with the intention of solving them within the existing social system where this possibility is open, but realising in struggle the power that exists in the people when organised?

The former alternative is at first sight the most combative, the most heroic, the most revolutionary, and some students accept it at that valuation. On one occasion, by way of example, I spoke to a college socialist society about Communist policy for higher education. When I had finished, I was immediately and triumphantly taken to task by a "Maoist".

I had demonstrated, he said, the revisionist character of the Communist Party. Had I not stated specifically that many, possibly most of the demands I had outlined were attainable within capitalism? Therefore my demands were for reforms, that is, reformist. Q.E.D.

But, I argued, would that not apply equally to a wage demand in normal conditions.

Yes, he agreed, the wages struggle was now a diversion and objectively counter-revolutionary.

Not everyone, however, will follow that line as he did through so logically to its conclusion. The naked obsession of the exponents of this line is with seeking a *confrontation* in which everyone will have to *polarise* for or against the revolution. If adequate forces polarise in favour of the revolution, well and good: if not, well, it's all valuable experience.

Often this kind of theory is put forward with little regard for the organisation or preparedness of the forces expected to carry through the revolution. Rarely is any serious account taken of the conditions of the forces resisting change. The subjective will to revolution of the "most advanced elements", multiplied by a big enough factor is, in practice, made the only condition for revolution. There is not a great deal of difference between this and the old Socialist Party of Great Britain idea that socialism would arrive when, and only when the workers were all educated in socialism.

Provocation and Polarisation

There is a very commonplace objection to the style of work which advocates provocation and polarisation. It is true that people learn from experience, but what lessons are drawn by, say, a student who is drawn into a struggle for student representation, only to be told half-way that the struggle is really about destroying bourgeois universities? What lessons will a student draw in a college where so many confrontations have occurred that even the "revolutionaries" are exhausted, and the authorities can pick off at will a handful who have carried out collective decisions and discipline them, without a finger being raised in their defence?

The trouble is that masses of people, even students, uncommitted to the "revolution" recognise and resent attempts to use them for purposes they have not accepted. When they see even one of their fellow students reaching too obviously for the crown of thorns, they are likely to leave him alone to wear it. Even where they have been led up the garden path, the lessons they draw when they retire exhausted from the quest for the ever-escalating, ever-receding revolutionary Grail, are by no means necessarily revolutionary lessons. They may very well be, they often are, lessons of disillusionment and cynicism. Yesterday's student revolutionary trims his beard to become tomorrow's advertising executive.

That this is no new discovery is borne out by the practice of the authorities for centuries of employing agents as provocateurs to involve people in plots or riots for which the authorities were prepared; the flames of the Reichstag or the barricades, driving people to rally round the authorities, in favour of law and order, of regression.

There is, however, a more abstract objection to the theory of provocation. What picture of the

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capitalist system does it assume? Does it grow naturally out of an examination of capitalism as a social system whose life expectancy is limited by its own internal contradictions, primarily by the retarding of the development of the forces of production, by the retention of relations of production based on private ownership? Is it the logical conclusion reached by looking at imperialism as a parasitical system operating within shrinking limits, confronting the coexisting socialist system, and national liberation movements, as well as its own working people?

On the contrary, we must trace the belief in provocation to a different world picture. Your would-be revolutionary student provocateur is impressed by the absolute growth of production in the capitalist sector, is impressed by the very consumer durables to which he is tempted to attribute enslavement, even servility of the working class. In effect, his picture of capitalism is of a wheel which will turn for ever, unless someone puts a spoke in it, or, to change the image, unless the petit-bourgeois hero puts the boot in.

Pessimism Rejected

In short, the revolutionary bravado, the talk of campuses as liberated areas, as red bases, reflects not revolutionary optimism, but a deeply pessimistic estimate of the prospects of advance to socialism in the developed capitalist countries.

If, however, we do recognise the limits within which capitalism operates, as well as its remaining growth potential, then we are able and obliged to offer the student movement a different programme. Where for the revolutionary subjectivist every limited gain is a setback, assuaging the revolutionary anger of the masses, for us every gain by working people in their living conditions is . . . a gain; an immediate gain for them, but also an objective limit to monopoly capitalism's freedom of manoeuvre. Every increase here in wages, salaries, student grants, pensions or social services, every Portuguese patrol ambushed in Mozambique, or copper-mine nationalised in Zambia, each factory or research station built or plan fulfilled in one of the socialist countries, is a nail in the coffin of capitalism.

We have therefore no inhibitions about students organising themselves to realise their own demands, whether these are the kind of demands which can be satisfied by a stroke of the pen by the existing authorities, or the kind of demands which in principle can be settled within capitalism by stretching capitalism to its limits, even the kind of demands, some of which already exist, which go beyond the limits of capitalism.

Without organisation and unity the students will make little progress even with their own most limited problems, and will certainly do nothing to help anyone else. While the particulars will vary with college and circumstances, four things are essential if the student movement is to realise its potential.

What is Needed

Firstly, more and larger branches of the Communist Party in the colleges. Students are still predominantly non-working class in social origin and occupational destiny. Commitment to purely student organisations and activities and aims can so easily reduce itself in retrospect to the sowing of wild oats. Membership of the Communist Party unites within the voluntary constraints of collectively examining in the light of scientific socialism, the problems and prospects of the community in which they participate, of agreeing collectively on what policy line to follow and of collectively following it, and it offers them this within a party based firmly on the working class, on the international working-class movement.

Secondly, broadly based left unity in the colleges. While a minority of students will be able to unite within the Communist Party on the basis of a common programme and ideology, many more are socialist in inclination. It is a great loss to us that so much energy is spent by socialist student fighting socialist student and antagonising might-have-been socialist students. Students are mostly too young to be politically labelled and written off. We need to establish or re-establish in each college a single society for all students who are socialist or moving towards socialism, on the basis of minimum requirements. Such a society should certainly be able to discuss

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questions on which socialists differ widely, but basically it should take up the fight against the Tories and the right wing generally, and provide an opportunity for students to hear representatives of the mainstream of the organised working-class movement.

Thirdly, students' unions with greater democracy and live participation than at present. There are often formal limits on student union autonomy still to be removed, but the worst limitations are often within student control, procedures restricting participation by the bulk of students when they feel involved and a lack of participation even where it is formally possible. Sometimes students on the left accept this as inevitable, and drift into dealing with individual issues through more or less spontaneous ad hoc committees. This solution yields a quick first harvest in dealing with one problem at a time, but the outcome is an organisational dust-bowl, a student union expected to deal with innumerable simultaneous and protracted problems, but isolated from the matters of greatest concern. A student union—locally or nationally—which commanded the confidence of its members would be able to avoid being drawn into untimely action provoked by the authorities at a time of the authorities' choosing. Dealing with the main, most pressing questions through the general meeting of the students' unions provides for the activists an invaluable check on their estimate of the readiness of the student body to take action, as well as harnessing the resources of the union to that action.

Students and the Labour Movement

Fourthly, more forms of unity of the student movement and the labour movement. This is a complex question. Some students contribute to this unity by their membership of the Communist Party, which is based on the working class: others, rather differently, through membership of the Labour Party. A number of mature students retain a live connection with their trade unions. Some e.g. the National Union of Teachers, Educational Institute of Scotland and Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs have special categories of student membership with college groups or representatives. The problems of class struggle as it is in fact engaged in day by day by the main sections of the labour movement are, inevitably, largely unfamiliar to most students, and socialist, Communist and other societies are able to reduce this ignorance by inviting labour movement speakers into the colleges. Increasingly the occupations into which students are moving are wage/salary earning with appropriate trade unions or professional bodies carrying out similar functions.

There is, however, no point in shirking the fact that the main body of students, a growing section of their age group, are estranged from the labour movement which for its own sake might well take some initiative towards the students. The Post Office Engineering Union, for example, this year put a resolution on student grants on the agenda of the Trades Union Congress.

In the long run we must aim and expect to see the student movement as a powerful auxiliary of the labour movement: the opposite of the role of students in the General Strike. Before that, however, we will have to encourage the student body to turn regularly to the labour movement for help with student problems and to work out their demands in such a way as to make that support possible.

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How to Read Marx's 'Capital'

Louis Althusser

(*This article first appeared in* l'Humanité *on April 21st, 1969. Louis Althusser, author of "Pour Marx", "Lénine et la Philosophie", etc. is a professor of philosophy.*)

CAPITAL appeared a century ago (in 1867). It retains all its freshness and is more relevant and actual than ever. Bourgeois ideologists, whether they be "economists", "historians", or "philosophers" have spent the greater part of the last century trying to refute it. They have declared the theories of the value of labour power, of surplus value and of the law of value to be "metaphysical" theses which have nothing whatever to do with "political economy". The latest of these ideologists to re-hash the old arguments while purporting to advance something new[1] is M. Raymond Aron.

The workers who read *Capital* can understand it far more easily than all the bourgeois specialists however learned and eminent they may be. Why? Because *Capital* deals quite simply with capitalist exploitation of which they are the victims. *Capital* singles out and outlines the mechanisms of this exploitation, under which the workers live all their lives and of all the various forms in which the bourgeoisie realises this exploitation—increases in working hours, in productivity, in the rhythm of work, wage cuts, unemployment, etc. *Capital* is therefore, above all, their class bible.

Apart from proletarians, there are other readers who take *Capital* seriously—salaried workers, employees and in general, certain sections of what are called "intellectual workers" (teachers, research workers, technicians, doctors, architects, etc.) not to mention university and high school students. All these, eager to know, want to understand the mechanisms of capitalist society in order to be able to find their bearings in the class struggle. They read *Capital*—which is both a scientific and revolutionary work and which explains the capitalist world. They read Lenin, who has continued Marx's work and who explains that capitalism has reached its highest and last stage—imperialism.

Two Difficulties

This said, it should be added that it is not easy for everyone to read and to understand *Capital*. We should face the fact that reading it presents two great difficulties—(1) a political difficulty, the main one, and (2) a theoretical one, which is subsidiary. As stated, the first difficulty is the political one. To understand *Capital* it is necessary either to have direct first-hand experience of capitalist exploitation (like the workers) or (like the revolutionary militants, whether they be workers or intellectuals) to have made the necessary effort to arrive at "the standpoint of the working class". Those who are neither workers nor revolutionary militants—no matter how learned they may be (like the "economists", "historians" and "philosophers")—have to understand that the price they have to pay for achieving such an understanding is a revolution in their outlook which is dominated enormously by bourgeois prejudices and preconceptions.

The second difficulty is the theoretical one. It is subsidiary to the first but it is nevertheless a real one. Those accustomed to theoretical work, above all in the field of theoretical science, less in the exact sciences (the "humanities" are 80 per cent falsifications of science, products of bourgeois ideology) are able to overcome this difficulty due to the fact that *Capital* is a book of pure theory. Others, workers for example, who are unaccustomed to pure theory, must make a sustained effort, work patiently and consistently to make advances in theory. We will help them. And they will soon see that they will be able to overcome this difficulty.

All they need to know for the present is:

(1) That *Capital* is a work of pure theory, that it deals with the theory of "the capitalist mode of production, the conditions of production and exchange corresponding to that mode" (Marx) and that *Capital* therefore deals with something "abstract" (something which cannot be touched with one's hands), that it is not therefore a book which deals with concrete history or empirical economics, as the "historians" and "economists" imagine it ought to do.

(2) That all theory is characterised both by the abstraction and the vigorous systemisation of its concepts, that it is therefore necessary to acquire the practice of abstraction and of vigorous systemisation. Abstract concepts and vigorous systems are not idle fantasies but instruments for the production of scientific knowledge, just as tools, machines and their precision systems are instruments for the

[1] Croce, the Italian philosopher, advanced the most "perfect" of such arguments I know—before World War I.

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production of material products (motor-cars, transistors, aeroplanes, etc.).

If this is borne in mind, the following elementary practical ideas for reading Volume 1 may be helpful.

The greatest difficulties—theoretical and otherwise—standing in the way of reading Volume I easily are unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately) all to be found right at the beginning of Volume I, more precisely in Chapter I of Part I, which deals with "commodities and money". My advice therefore is—begin by reading Part II of Volume I entitled "The Transformation of Money into Capital". It is not possible in my view to begin (and only to begin) to understand Part I without having read and re-read the whole of Volume I from Part II onwards.

This is more than a piece of advice. It is a recommendation, one which I regard as imperative. Everyone can confirm it by practical experience.

If one begins to read Volume I from the very beginning, that is, from Part I, one can get bogged down and tend to give up. Or, one can think one understands and this is even worse, for one can end up understanding something totally different from what one is trying to understand.

From Part II (the transformation of money into capital) onwards things are very clear. The reader is now able to get right to the heart and core of Volume I.

This is the law of surplus value which workers are able to grasp without the slightest difficulty because, quite simply, it is the scientific theory, the *force* of which they experience every day, namely class exploitation.

Parts III and IV, both very weighty but very clear, are of decisive relevance to the class struggle today. They deal with the two fundamental forms of surplus value with which the capitalists can carry through the maximum possible exploitation of the working class—what Marx calls absolute and relative surplus value.

Absolute surplus value (see Part III) is related to the length of the working day. Marx explains that the capitalist class strives inexorably to extend the length of the working day as much as possible and that one of the aims of working class struggle for well over a century has been to secure a reduction in the working day.

The historical stages of this fierce struggle are well known. They were for the 12 hour, then the 10 hour and then for the 8 hour day and finally at the time of the Popular Front (1936) for the 40 hour week. Unfortunately, it is equally well known that the capitalist class uses all its power and every possible means—legal and not quite legal—to extend the length of the real working day (hours actually worked) even where they are obliged to limit the legal working day as a result of laws won by large-scale working class struggle (e.g. 1936).

In actual practice, the working week varies between 45-54 hours and the employers have discovered the swindle of "overtime". There is also so-called "black work" beyond "regular" hours.

A word about "overtime". According to agreements it is paid for at 25 per cent, 50 per cent and even 100 per cent above that of "normal" rates. This would seem to mean that such work is very costly for the employers. But in reality it is very advantageous to them. For it enables the capitalists to keep expensive machinery running 24 hours out of 24 so that it depreciates as quickly as possible before being made obsolete by the new, even more efficient machines which modern technology is ceaselessly producing. For the workers, overtime earnings, are anything but free gifts presented to them by the employers. These earnings do of course mean something extra for the workers, which they can do with, but it ruins their health. Despite its deceptive appearance, overtime means nothing more than additional *exploitation* for the workers.

Let us now pass on to Part IV (Production of relative surplus value). This is a burning question.

Relative surplus value is the prime form of exploitation today. It is also much more subtle. It is bound up with the increased use of machinery in industry (and in agriculture) and with the consequent increase in productivity. This increase in productivity (which has been spectacular during the past 10-15 years) is due not only to the introduction of more and more complex machinery which makes it possible to produce the same amount of products in half, a third, or even a quarter of the time formerly taken, but also to intensify the work flow.

All this is discussed by Marx in Part IV. He outlines the mechanisms of exploitation involved in the increase in productivity in their concrete forms. And he demonstrates that increases in productivity never automatically benefit the working class since its result is precisely to increase its exploitation.

What the workers have to do is the same as they did with regard to working hours; they have to fight against the characteristic forms of exploitation connected with productivity, to limit the effects of these forms (struggle against the intensified rhythm of labour, against the elimination of certain jobs, i.e. against redundancy caused by increased productivity etc.). Marx illustrates in an absolutely irrefutable fashion that the workers cannot hope to benefit permanently from increases in productivity before they and their allies conquer power, that until then, all they can do is to fight to limit its effects, that is to fight against their exploitation, which is part of

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the aim of the intense class struggle which they are waging.

If necessary, the reader can omit Part V (the production of absolute and relative surplus values), for the time being, for it is very technical, and pass on directly to Part VI which is concerned with wages.

Productivity and Class Struggle

Here again the workers are literally *at home*, for Marx ignoring the bourgeois mystification which asserts that "the labour" of the workers is "paid for at its value", examines the different *kinds* of wage rates—time rates, piece rates etc., that is the different traps set by the bourgeoisie to deceive the workers and to destroy their will to wage the class struggle.

In this part, the workers can recognise that the question of wages or, as the bourgeois ideologists say, the question of the "standard of living" is in the last analysis, a *question of class struggle* (and not a question of increasing "productivity" from which the workers are "naturally" bound to benefit).

After finishing Parts II—VI, workers will realise that their economic struggle can only be a class struggle against the two principal forms of exploitation which are an inevitable tendency of the capitalist system.

These are:

(1) For *increases* in the working day
(2) For cuts in wages.

The two fundamental objectives (and watchwords) of the economic struggle waged by the working class are therefore *directly* opposed to the objectives of the struggle waged by the capitalist class for they are directed:

(1) Against any lengthening of the working day
(2) Against wage cuts.

Although I have emphasised that the essence of the economic struggle waged by the working class is the struggle against increased working hours and against wage cuts, it is as well to note the following three fundamental principles.

(1) An illusion spread by the reformists is aimed at making people think that under capitalism, wages can be increased simply because productivity increases. This camouflages the inevitable tendency of capitalism to *reduce* wages. Communists must explain this tendency to their workmates. Under capitalism, all wage struggles are directed against this tendency. Of course, it goes without saying that all struggles against wage cuts are, at the same time, also struggles *for increases* in existing wages.

(2) The reformists seek to hide this fact because they want to conjure the class struggle out of existence. The struggle *against* increases in working hours and *against* wage-cuts is not a matter of increasing productivity but a question of class struggle—in this case class struggle on the *economic* front.

(3) The *economic* struggle is a limited one because it is a defensive one against the *tendency*, inevitable under capitalism, to *increase economic exploitation*. The only struggle waged by the working class which can transform the defensive economic struggle (*against* speed up and the intensification of the work rhythm, *against* wage cuts, *against* elimination of jobs, *against* arbitrary fixing of bonuses), into an offensive struggle is working class struggle on the political plane. This political struggle waged by the working class has as its ultimate objective—*the socialist revolution*. This political struggle includes the economic struggle and this is the kind of political struggle waged by the communists—the struggle for the socialist revolution.

All this is made perfectly plain in *Capital* even though the difference between the *economic* and the *political* aspects of the class struggle are not dealt with in any great detail. This is done, with great clarity by the followers of Marx, above all by Lenin (in *What is to be Done*), and by all the revolutionary leaders (Maurice Thorez always emphasised this). No revolutionary perspective is possible without the primacy of the political struggle over the simple economic struggle. For apolitical economic struggle leads to economism, that is to class collaboration, while on the other hand, pure concentration on the political struggle, neglect of, scorn for, the economic struggle, leads to voluntarism, i.e. to adventurism.

The class struggle must be conducted on a national scale, taking into account the special circumstances of the situation in the given society, but, at the same time, as part of the struggle of the working class internationally.

"Snowballs" and Massacres

After Part VI, on wages, readers should go on to Part VII (The accumulation of Capital), which is very clear. Here Marx explains that the tendency of capitalism is ceaselessly to transform the surplus value extracted from the workers into *capital*, for capital never ceases to "snowball" i.e. to reproduce itself on an ever increasing scale in order to extract more surplus labour (surplus value) from the workers. This thesis is splendidly illustrated by the concrete example of Britain during the years 1846-1866. Lenin showed that from the end of the 19th century, this reproduction of capital assumed the form of *Imperialism*—fusion of banking and industrial capital to form finance capital and the direct super-exploitation of "the rest of the world" in the form of colonialism, unleashing of colonial wars, then inter-imperialist wars, which revealed to everybody in the clearest possible way that Imperialism had now entered on its death-throes, since the two world wars resulted amongst other things, in the 1917 Revolution in Russia, the establishment of the

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People's Democracies, and then in the Chinese Revolution (1949).

Part VIII (Primitive Accumulation) with which Vol. I concludes, contains a discovery of very great importance. In it, Marx explodes bourgeois mystification about the birth of capitalism which seeks to explain it by the thrift of the first capitalists who worked hard and saved their money in order to provide themselves with the first kind of capital. Marx shows that, in reality, capitalism only began to develop in Western Countries after there had been an enormous "accumulation" of wealth in the hands of a number of patricians, and that this accumulation was the brutal result of centuries of piracy, raids, pillage, rapine and the massacres of whole peoples (e.g. of the descendants of the Incas and other inhabitants of fabulous Peru, rich in gold mines).

But this Marxist thesis concerning the historical *origins* of capitalism remains a burning reality today. For if capitalism in the "metropolitan countries" today operates without massacres, it continues to practise the same methods of thievery, brigandage, violence and massacres in the "outlying parts", in those countries which are called the "Third World" —Latin America, Africa, Asia. The massacres perpetrated by the Americans in Vietnam are proof today of what Marx wrote when describing the origins of capitalism in Part VIII of Volume I.

But the situation has changed completely. The peoples are no longer allowing themselves to be massacred. They have begun to organise and to defend themselves because, amongst other reasons, Marx and Lenin and their successors have educated militant revolutionary fighters in the class struggle. That is why the Vietnamese people will be victorious over the strongest military power in the world, thanks to the *People's War*, led by the organisations which the people have created.

If we want to read *Capital* we should read Lenin (especially the last part of *Left Wing Communism*—"Some Conclusions"—in which Lenin discussed especially the conditions for the socialist revolution in the *Western Capitalist* countries). This will teach us that in our lifetime, many of us will see that the revolution will triumph in our own country.

Golden Rule

I will sum up my advice as to how to read *Capital*, as follows:

1. Leave Part I, to begin with.
2. Begin with Part II.
3. Read Parts II, III, IV, VII and VIII, with the greatest attention (Leave Part V for later reading.)
4. Then try to read Part I by itself knowing that it is extremely difficult and requires much detailed explanation[2].

This said I would also advise readers of *Capital* to precede their study of Marx's master work by reading the two following little books which serve as an excellent introduction.

1. *Wage, Labour and Capital* (1847) by Marx.
2. *On "Capital"* by Engels which outlines the essential ideas contained in Volume I admirably.

If it is desired to understand certain important conclusions deriving from Volume I presented in a clear and simple fashion, readers are advised, after reading Volume I to go on to read Marx's *Wages, Price and Profit* (1865). These two small works, *Wage Labour and Capital* and *Wages, Price and Profit* are lectures by Marx, one delivered very early on (in 1847) and the other much later (in 1865). The first was given to a meeting of workers, the second to the General Council of the First International.

Reading them, one can grasp the kind of *language* which Marx felt it necessary to use when speaking to workers and to militants of the labour movement. Marx knew how to speak simply, clearly and directly but, at the same time he made not the slightest concession with regard to the *scientific* content of his theories. He believed that the workers had a right to science and that they were perfectly capable of mastering the difficulties normal in any real scientific expression. This golden rule is—any remains—a lesson for us all.

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[2] Here I can only provide a brief note regarding the *theoretical* difficulties which prevent a rapid reading of Vol. 1 of *Capital* (Marx corrected it at least ten times before giving it its final form—and not only because of questions of exposition).

A word or two to help cope with these difficulties.

i. The theory of the value of labour power is only comprehensible as a special case from which Marx and Engels derived the *law of value*. This very formula—*law of value*—itself creates difficulties.

ii. The theory of surplus value is only one special aspect—of a most extensive theory, that of surplus labour which exists in all societies but which is appropriated in all class societies. This theory of surplus labour is not however dealt with itself in all its generality in Volume I.

Volume I thus presents the special peculiarity that it contains solutions to problems which are only posed in Volumes II, III and IV and certain problems the solutions to which are only contained in the succeeding volumes.

What is essential is this character of "suspense" in "anticipation" which the difficulties in reading Volume I give rise to. One should be aware of this and take account of it, that is, read Volume I bearing in mind the existence of Volumes II, III and IV.

Secondly, and this is not negligible by any means, certain difficulties in Volume I especially the terminology in certain passages of Chapter I, Part I, and the theory of "fetishism" are relics of his Hegelian inheritance, "flirting" (koketierend) with which, Marx confessed to be one of his weaknesses.

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Document :

The Struggle in Spain

Santiago Carrillo

We print below the first part of a report given by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Spain to the International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties in Moscow in June of this year. It is translated from the text given in Mundo Obrero *of June 22, 1969. The subheads are partly from* Mundo Obrero *and partly ours.*

DEAR comrades, in cordially greeting this Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties, I wish to express our appreciation of all that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has done towards its organisation and preparation.

And in addressing it, it is impossible to forget that we are speaking to the world, that not only Communists are interested in the resolutions and documents of this Conference.

The attention of the basic political and social forces in every country, who attentively follow Communist policy, is focused on this meeting: the workers first and foremost; the peasants, the progressive intellectuals, the younger generations of workers and students, the democratic petty-bourgeois forces and even bourgeois groups injured by US imperialism. We must bear in mind in our deliberations that in the present situation of decomposition of the capitalist system, when socialism has ceased to be a fantasy and has embodied itself in living and human attainments, new social phenomena are coming to light to which we must give constant attention.

New Social Phenomena

One of these is the mass revolutionisation of the student youth, which in the capitalist countries is fighting together with the working class to transform the structure of the old regime, for a better world.

Another is the transformation taking place in the ranks of the Catholic Church; in it, groups of clergy and even some of the hierarchy, are refusing to continue helping capitalism, accepting and preaching the socialisation of the basic means of production, and acting together with the working class in defence of a democratic policy against capitalist and imperialist reaction.

There exists a sector of which nobody has spoken here, to which nevertheless great attention must be paid because it is a most important factor in present-day reality. This sector is the armed forces, in whose ranks the people can find allies, given certain conditions, for the democratisation of the country and the defence of national independence against imperialism. This question is very much alive in our country, where in the broad protest movement against US bases, sections of the military are coming out against the continuance of these bases on Spanish territory.

We Spanish communists have no hesitation in raising these questions because they are alive and present not only in Spain but also in many other countries and we should keep them in our revolutionary sights.

In the document which serves as the basis for this Conference, our epoch is characterised as the epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism, and it is stated that there are real possibilities to solve the essential problems of our time in favour of peace, democracy and socialism.

Effectively the present situation of imperialism, headed by the US, is characterised by its brutality, its aggressive character and at the same time by its powerlessness to resolve its own problems, by the defeat of its efforts to maintain its fundamental positions in the world, by the bankruptcy of its policies.

Peoples' Struggles

The most extraordinary example is given us by the heroic struggle of the people of Vietnam, whom we warmly greet, who are keeping the US imperialist aggressors at bay and inflicting severe blows on them. The victories of the Vietnamese patriots are a stimulus and a spur to all liberation and revolutionary forces.

The colonial system of imperialism has decayed, and many of the countries that lived under its yoke are not simply resisting the pressures and threats of those who formerly dominated them but are seeking help and support for their economic independence in the socialist countries despite imperialist manoeuvres to prevent them.

Imperialism has lost important positions in Asia and Africa and is suffering severe blows in Latin America where revolt is fermenting against the

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United States among the peoples who see their way to liberation in the example of socialist Cuba.

When the paid agents of US reaction murdered our unforgettable comrade Che Guevara, hero of all those peoples who are fighting for freedom and independence, and the priest Camilo Torres who testified his solidarity with the people by shouldering a guerrilla rifle, they perhaps thought that they were finally burying the will of the Spanish-speaking peoples of America to be free. But they were mistaken.

The murderers did not realise that what they were burying was the seed of anti-imperialist rebellion which is now flowering all over the Latin American continent from Tierra del Fuego to the Rio Grande. The armed struggle of the Dominican people against the US interventionists; the impressive strikes of the workers and the student rebellions in Argentina today, like the explosion of protest by the Mexican and Brazilian students yesterday; the self-sacrificing struggle of the Guatemalan people, of the Colombians and the Bolivians, the mass political struggles in Chile, Venezuela, Ecuador and Uruguay and the patriotic attitude of the Peruvian military against Washington, these are examples of revolt and struggle for national and social freedom in those countries against reaction and imperialism.

Europe is struggling, and outstanding in this struggle is the worker and student movement of May-June 1968 in France, which shook the power of the monopolies and had great international repercussions. Outstanding also are the mass actions of the workers, peasants, students and the white-collar and professional people in Italy.

The Struggle in Spain

Spain is struggling, in what begins to take shape as the dawn of freedom, democracy and socialism. And in this struggle against the Franco regime, which extends all over Spanish territory, the working class, the younger generation of students and workers—who had nothing to do with the war and want to live in a democratic country, clean and free from the scars of a tragic past—are participating with resolute enthusiasm.

The youth is not unaware of the tremendous sacrifices that our people made, led by the working class and democratic forces among which the Communist Party was distinguished for its policy of unity, its combativity and its discipline.

In this struggle of today, the Communist Party shows itself anew as the main animator and driving force, grudging neither blood nor sacrifice—and as a parenthesis to my speech, comrades, communists of all countries, I want to remind you, as once again the bloody shadow of fascism begins to take shape in West Germany, cradle of Hitlerism, that it was in Spain that the first battles were launched against fascist aggression, that the Spanish people were the first to resist that aggression with arms. And I wish to recall, my soul shaken by the tragic fate of many of them, the men of the International Brigades who fought in Spain, who came to our country ready to give their lives in the fraternal effort to help the Spanish people defend their freedom and bar the road to the bloody torrent of fascism that began to sweep over Europe. And from this platform I want to repeat our homage and the testimony of our everlasting gratitude and great friendship for the survivors of that heroic gesture.

And in the present stage of the struggle in our country, which is fraught with danger—and this is not ignored by those who are coming to swell our ranks—our best comrades are again falling.

I would like to recall here our heroes of yesterday and today: Julian Grimau, model of communist stoicism and fidelity, vilely murdered by Francoism; Narciso Julian, who has spent over 20 years in prison; Jose Sandoval, Ramon Ormazabal, Pedro Ardiaca, who have spent long years in jail; comrade Horaico Fernandez Inguanzo, member of the EC of our Party who was sentenced to death and spent 15 years in prison and has now been arrested once again in Asturias. I wish to recall the leaders of the Workers' Commissions: Marcelino Camacho, Julian Ariza, David Morin, Luis Hoyos, Trinidad Garcia, Jose Maria Ibarrola, Vicente Faus, Manuel Orones and countless others, arrested for their activity in defence of the workers' demands. And in mentioning the heroes of the anti-Franco struggle it is impossible to forget the actions of the workers, students and intellectuals of the Basque Country, the progressive Catholics and militant nationalists of the ETA who, in fighting for the national rights of Euzkadi are fighting for the liberty of all the peoples of Spain.

New Revolutionary Possibilities Open Before Mankind

Comrades, in the present epoch new revolutionary possibilities are opening before mankind. The scientific/technical revolution carries within itself the material promises for the victory of socialism and the abolition of exploitation and poverty throughout the world, the transforming forces of society that are capable of changing social conditions and putting the enormous productive forces into development in the service of humanity.

The Communist Parties are growing in number and influence. At their side are appearing new revolutionary forces, arising because of the aggravation of the crisis of imperialism and the extra-

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ordinary penetration of Marxist-Leninist ideas. These forces are our natural allies, regardless of various differences of tactics and concepts. Lenin said very correctly that "whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will never live to see it".

The socialist revolution, he added:

> "cannot be anything other than an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all and sundry oppressed and disappointed elements. Inevitably sections of the petty-bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will participate in it—without such participation, *mass* struggle is impossible, without it *no* revolution is possible—and just as inevitably they will bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But objectively they will attack capital, and the class-conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of a variegated and discordant, motley and outwardly fragmented mass struggle, will be able to unite and direct it, capture power, seize the banks, expropriate the trusts which all hate (though for different reasons!) and introduce other dictatorial measures which in their totality will amount to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, which will, however, by no means immediately 'purge' itself of petty-bourgeois slag." ("The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up." *Collected Works*, Vol. 22.)

Lenin had in mind the extreme complexity of the revolutionary movement, which is even greater today, a complexity determined precisely by the extension and deepening of the movement. For the fact is that in it, flowing together as in a great torrent, are forces of very diverse origin and formation.

The national liberation movement, which is developing in the countries oppressed by imperialism, is the most important ally of the world working class. This movement has its own objectives and characteristics, which vary among themselves according to the countries and their situations, offering an extremely rich and diverse gamut of characteristics, which run from the glorious liberation war of the Vietnamese people, model of revolutionary and patriotic determination in which the leading influence of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard is seen, to other movements of more heterogeneous orientation and composition, with a less marked working class influence.

Whatever the forms, whatever may be the forces which at a given moment in their shifting development influence their direction most markedly, the national liberation movement is our natural ally, that tends objectively towards socialism since the national struggle against imperialism in the present epoch logically leads to socialist positions and is integrated with, and forms part of, the process of the world socialist revolution.

It is natural that within each detachment of this great movement, the Communist Parties, the Marxist-Leninist forces, should endeavour to give it the most forthright direction. But we must not get bewildered or alarmed if at times these movements adopt tactics, expound concepts which are not 100 per cent ours. It is impossible to try and attain uniformity in a revolutionary movement so vast and diverse as that of the modern epoch. Only in the process of the struggle, through its own experience and sometimes not only from victories but from defeats, will differences be overcome and a fuller homogeneity be obtained. But even so, what will be attained will not be uniformity, for differences of situation, of development and of the concrete features of each detachment will remain and persist for a long while.

And Marxism-Leninism, which is not a static or a finished theory—and neither is it omnipotent, for no theory by itself is omnipotent—Marxism-Leninism, which is a constant creation of revolutionary thought and action, closely interlaced, cannot tackle the anti-imperialist liberation movement with ready-made, definitive, stereotyped formulas; it must enrich and develop itself with the experiences of that movement.

Today we are seeing how in certain developed capitalist countries—for example in the US—where the working class finds itself under the ideological influence of imperialism, the struggle of the black people, the actions of the student movement and of certain intellectual minorities, sensitised by the world revolutionary process and very directly by the unjust war which North American imperialism is waging against the whole people of Vietnam, are acting as a reverse tendency which can contribute to the awakening of the consciousness of the working masses. It is evident that this process does not fit certain Marxist schemes—which shows that life itself is richer than any theory. And that our theory, Marxism-Leninism, must be open and must integrate within itself all that the revolutionary experience of the masses constantly brings us.

Youth and Students

In the capitalist countries, the development of the productive forces is profoundly changing social structures, not in the sense proclaimed by those capitalist ideologues who announce the shrinking and near-extinction of the proletariat, but on the contrary, in the sense that the scientific and technical cadres, a great part of the intelligentsia whose social conditions of existence formerly resembled those of the bourgeoisie, are now being shifted towards the same social situation as that of the workers.

And what is important is that these forces, whose numerical weight and mass importance grows every day with scientific/technical progress,

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and who are becoming aware of this situation, are organising, raising demands, participating ever more determinedly and energetically in the struggle against monopoly power, and coming towards the ideological positions of the working class.

The student movement of protest and "answering back", the weight of which in the present revolutionary struggles cannot be denied and which in Spain and elsewhere is ever more closely linked with the proletarian struggle, is a phenomenon, is closely connected with the rising consciousness of the new social situation in which a great part of today's intelligentsia finds itself.

The mass youth forces, whose origin generally speaking is not proletarian, irrupt into the social life of the peoples with great energy and militancy, objectively become a valuable ally of the Communist Parties in the task of sensitising and attracting to the revolutionary movement the middle classes, hitherto under the political influence of the bourgeoisie, and of others which this youth is able to draw into the democratic struggle. They can also—and this is our experience in Spain—play a very important part in the development of the peasant movement, in its radicalisation; and they can help the mobilisation of the more backward elements of the working class. I emphasise that in thus speaking we are not enunciating some abstract theory but are basing ourselves on the concrete experience of the Spanish Communist Party.

These new forces are objectively acting as a most important factor which assists the Marxist-Leninist vanguard in the task of politicising and radicalising broad social sectors.

It is true that at times, in some of the groups of these young forces, the spirit of rebellion, the inevitable immaturity, the impatience and certain prejudices of the class or social stratum from which they come, lead to attitudes of revolutionary infantilism, tendencies to anarchism, which we should in no wise judge summarily nor condemn *en bloc*.

These attitudes often confuse Party members who regard these young people as a kind of "foreign immigrant" in the revolution.

In a mass movement of this sort and breadth, in which hundreds of thousands of young people participate, we should not be surprised that such attitudes appear. Those of us who came to the Communist Party in other periods do not forget the impatience, the idealistic confusion, the sharp spirit of "retort" to the society of that period which we had ourselves, we youngsters who were starting to become Communists. With what passion, regarding ourselves as the best interpreters of Lenin and of the October Revolution of 1917, did we confront the old leaders and their methods of struggle—which were not always so obnoxious as they then seemed to us!

Rejuvenation

In those days too there were veterans of the working class and socialist movement who regarded the impatience and militancy of the youth as inconvenient for the development of the struggle as they conceived it.

Today also we sometimes find among older comrades a lack of understanding, a reluctance to accept these new forces and grasp the new problems that are rising up in the communist movement. And this resistence, notwithstanding the goodwill of the comrades, instead of contributing to the revolutionary maturing of these new forces and their integration into the communist parties, alienates them from us and leaves them open to other propaganda.

The experience of our Party in these years (and I might add, throughout its history) shows us that an attitude of openness towards the youth is decisive for the vitality and revolutionary consolidation of the Party of the working class. If our Party had not opened itself unreservedly to the working-class, peasant and student youth, we should not possess the strength and influence which the Communist Party of Spain now enjoys. The bloody toll of our ranks taken by the Franco repression in 30 years of illegality, shootings, imprisonment, concentration camps, tortures and emigration would have exhausted our Party. We might remain a heroic record for posterity but we would not be the live, active, militant factor that we are today in the political life of Spain.

And allow me to say, in no spirit of criticism towards anyone, that the Communist Parties, in order to become the leading force in the struggle for democracy and socialism, besides having a correct policy must be capable of rejuvenating themselves, of interesting and attracting to their ranks, the young generations which are irrupting into the struggle with great militancy and the desire for social transformation. One of the features of our parties today should be their receptivity to these new phenomena, their ability to recognise what the Catholics in their camp have called the "aggiornamiento"—that is: the bringing up to date, with creative revolutionary spirit, of Marxist-Leninist theory and political action.

In Face of a New Situation

There is a vast difference between the world of today and the one in which the veterans of the communist movement began their struggle. At that time the first socialist revolution, under the leadership of Lenin's party, was on the way to

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victory, and the entire effort, the entire concern was directed towards preserving and upholding that first conquest which was growing in the conditions of military encirclement imposed by the imperialist powers. What importance could the mistakes and the defects which there might have been in the first steps of a socialist experience absolutely new in history—what importance could they have at that time?—errors and defects which Lenin, moreover did not hide but boldly announced so that people could learn from and so that they could be corrected. The essential thing was that imperialism must not extinguish the hope, the example, the light which was radiating all over the world from the socialist victory and which showed all of us the road towards the destruction of capitalism, towards the socialist revolution.

We were right, and there is nothing of which we repent, but today the world has changed. There is certainly no one in our camp who is ignorant of the fact that imperialism is still strong, aggressive and extremely dangerous and that we shall still have to fight hard battles in order to free mankind once and for all from the oppression and the threat of destruction which imperialism represents. After the October Revolution, however, the Soviet Union, with the self-sacrificing labour of its entire people, transformed itself into a great power, the strongest bastion of the socialist cause; it defeated the Hitlerite aggressors and opened the way for the development of eight new socialist states in Europe. Later, on this basis, came the victory of the revolution in China. The Korean Democratic People's Republic and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam appeared on the scene, and the revolution in Cuba, particularly near and dear to us Spaniards, was victorious. The process of decolonisation occurred and dozens of new states emerged, freed from the yoke of colonialism. Today, in the developed capitalist countries, the scientific and technical revolution is putting on the agenda the urgent necessity for radical socialist changes, the necessity for the taking of power by the working class and its allies who are against the monopolies.

Ever since 1917 and the formation of the Communist Parties, the forces of the world revolution have gone on acquiring such strength that, even though it is true that we can still suffer temporary reverses, imperialism, from the standpoint of history, has lost the match.

In this period we find ourselves confronted with a new situation to which we cannot close our eyes if we do not want to end up by lagging behind. At a time when we have not yet set the seal on our victory over capitalism on a world scale, and when we still have big battles ahead of us before we achieve this, problems of a new type are arising for us to solve—problems that are disconcerting for those who look at the present situation with the same eyes as in the 'twenties and 'thirties.

It is a question of problems that are arising in what we can already call our world—the socialist world. Problems arising from the contradictions which still cling to the socialist states from their capitalist and even their feudal past, like some poisonous heritage, and arising also from their different levels of development — contradictions which may become worse and which do become worse when they are treated in a subjective way. Imperialist propaganda is gambling on this, trying to make the masses of the people doubt the superiority of socialism over capitalism and endeavouring to conceal the much more serious, incurable diseases of its own system. In face of imperialist propaganda, however, our attitude cannot be one of denying the evidence, which would damage the credit of our parties, but must be that of recognising the existence of these problems, analysing their causes and in this way showing that we communists are capable of overcoming these difficulties. This makes it necessary for us in our propaganda, without beating about the bush, to deal with the problems of socialism precisely in order to give more bite to our struggle against the capitalist system. Socialism is already so strong that neither imperialist propaganda, nor socialism's difficult problems, nor even our mistakes will prevent it, in the long run, from developing.

Our Conception of Socialism in Spain

In the effort to bring the thought and action of the Marxist-Leninist parties up to date, we have to take account of the consequences of the modifications of social structures in the arena of political struggle. In Spain—and we believe that in one way or another this is also the case in some other countries—the panorama of political forces has undergone profound changes. The Socialist Party, the anarcho-syndicalist movement and the historical republican parties, which played such a big part under the Second Republic and which were our principal allies in the war against fascism, within the Popular Front, now no longer carry the same weight as they did then. On the other hand, a democratic and progressive Catholic movement has arisen, a considerable part of which is inclined towards socialism. This is a movement that is destined to play an important role and which is already doing so today. And in the nationalities of Spain—Catalonia, Euzkadi (the Basque country) and Galicia—the national feeling which fascism endeavoured, though in vain, to stifle, has given

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Politics and Race

Joan Bellamy

THE immigration into Britain of one and a quarter million workers and their families from the former colonial countries of India, Pakistan and the Caribbean, has introduced a new and crucial issue into British politics.

This racial minority, 2 per cent of the present population experiences discrimination, under privilege and social exclusion. Their presence is used by the extreme Tories, fascists and other racialist groups as an agitational issue through which they seek to create for themselves some semblance of political support from the British people, who, up to now have rejected them.

A combination of reactionary campaigns and facile optimism that "it can't happen here", will create the very circumstances in which racial prejudice becomes respectable; discrimination will be first tolerated, then justified and finally institutionalised.

For most Communists the lesson is clear. If the working class succumb to racialism or fail to defeat it, they will deliver themselves, as well as the racial minority, bound hand and foot to the most vicious reactionary sections of the ruling class. The prospects for democracy, much less socialism, will be grim in the extreme.

The outcome of failure is clear enough in the lessons of German, South African and United States history, but to grapple with the problems of the fight back in our country present Communists with a new challenge.

Comfortable Myth

The idea that the British people are inherently racially tolerant is simply a comfortable myth and it would be astonishing if it were true in view of the history of British capitalism. That process of capital accumulation so vividly described by Marx, produced not only the surplus on which modern industry was built, but a reactionary ideology, which, through the successive stages of the development of British imperialism, has been added to and served up to our people with some effect.

> "The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extirpation, enslavement and entombment in mines of the aboriginal population, the beginning of the conquest and looting of the East Indies, the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black skins, signalised the rosy dawn of the era of capitalist production. These idyllic proceedings are the chief moments of primitive accumulation. On their heels treads the commercial war of the European nations with the globe for a theatre."
>
> Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, page 775, George Allen & Unwin, 1938.

The inhuman subjugation of other human beings to slavery and vicious exploitation required justification and Negro slavery, inevitably, found its apologists.

In the 18th century, it is estimated, 25,000 Negroes were sold every year with the average rising to 30,000 in the early years of the 19th century. In the ten years following 1783, Liverpool ships carried 313,737 slaves "worth" £15,186,850, bringing a profit of £12,294,116.

Negro slaves were often brought to England by merchants and plantation owners. Even though they were on English soil they remained slaves and 18th century newspapers carried advertisements offering Negro servants for sale. Granville Sharp conducted a series of cases challenging slave ownership in this country and in 1772 obtained a judgment that it was unlawful. The following year attempts were made to pass a bill through Parliament for the toleration of slavery in England, a move that failed though the slave trade went on:

> "It is significant perhaps that in preparing his meticulous case against Negro slavery, Granville Sharp went to the extent of obtaining scientific opinion as to whether the *black man was a human being* (my italics J.B.). He had no personal doubts on the subject when he wrote to Jacob Bryant that: 'I am far from having any particular esteem for the Negroes; but as I think myself obliged to consider them as *men*, I am certainly obliged also to use my best endeavours to prevent their being treated as *beasts* by our unchristian countrymen, who deny them the privilege of human nature, and to exercise their own *brutality* will scarcely allow that Negroes are human beings. The tracing of their descent, therefore, is a point of some consequence to the subject on which I am now engaged for their defence'."
>
> *Negroes in Britain*, p. 197, K. L. Little, Kegan Paul.

Between 1792 and 1811 the slave trade was abolished. The pattern of general trade itself changed and the need for raw materials and the sale of industrial products became increasingly significant.

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Old Ideas Live On

The ideas of Negro inferiority did not disappear with the abolition of the slave trade, on the contrary, colonialism was further to reinforce and develop racialist ideology.

Contempt for African peoples was already endemic in the period even before the Congress of Berlin formalised the "final" division of Africa.

Ussher, Governor of the West African Settlements, could write as early as 1868:

> "But unfortunately another and less creditable movement has been secretly at work, and threatens at this crisis entirely to undermine British influence. A small class of discontented and unprincipled natives, principally mulattoes and semi-educated blacks . . . is active in its endeavours to persuade the ignorant, impressionable and childlike Fantees, that the time has come to govern themselves. . . ."
>
> G. E. Metcalfe, *Great Britain and Ghana*, p. 323, Nelson, 1964.

In his book *The Imperial Frontier in the Tropics*, 1865-75 W. D. McIntyre produces a series of quotations from minutes, private letters and speeches which express the contempt in which the British ruling class held people of other races. Terms such as "native states" or "uncivilised" or "barbarous states" were common. Lord Halifax spoke of "these Gold Coast niggers". Wolseley, who conducted military campaigns against the Ashantis wrote of Africans as "so many monkeys" and Lord Stanley in a speech in the House of Commons said that the life of a British officer was, "measured by any rational standards of comparison worth more than the merely animal existence of a whole African tribe".

"Kimberley once alluded to the question of trial by jury in Sierre Leone with the quip "A jury of English is a tolerable institution—a jury of Irishmen often intolerable—a jury of blacks I should say always intolerable" (page 71).

Readers of E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* will recognise in the following, the factual prototype of the situation so brilliantly realised in the novel:

> "The growing colour prejudice against the Indian in England is due among other things, to the fact that the Britishers retired from overseas dependencies and now permanently settled in England are increasing from year to year. Through circumstances which they could not always help these gentlemen had occasion to see only a small section of the people in these countries and by no means the best side of their character. Therefore, the opinions which are now given and taken as the result of lifelong experience were really formed on an imperfect knowledge.
>
> "An Indian civil servant goes to India at about 24. During the first four or five years of his career in India he is posted to a country town in the capacity of what is called a sub-divisional magistrate. He spends the morning going through his files and receiving visitors, mostly title-holders and title-seekers who seek jobs for themselves or their dependents. The hours between eleven and four—the so-called office hours—he spends in trying criminal cases of all descriptions such as theft, burglary, arson, rape, poisoning, etc. The European community in such towns is extremely small, consisting often of a few jute merchants with whom he spends the evening. He cannot help listening to their complaints of the tricks played on them by native brokers. He does not seek any Indian society, because the Indians he has met or heard about did not impress him. Four or five years of life like this and the young English Civil Servant has formed his opinions of Indians. . . ." *The Spectator*, March 1931, cited K. L. Little, *op. cit.*

"White Man's Burden"

The Christian church is not without sin either in relation to spreading views about "inferior" and "superior" peoples. Many missionaries regarded as self evident the "superiority" of the Christian and the white man.

In the pre-imperialist era, the Church Missionary Society aimed to establish an independent African Christian Church. One of the steps in this direction was the ordination of Samuel Crowther, a Yoruba, as Bishop in West Africa. This created an uproar. One prominent missionary wrote:

> "There is one other view we must not lose sight of, viz. that the Negro feels a great respect for the white man, that God kindly gives a great talent to the white man in trust to be used for the Negro's good. Shall we shift the responsibility? Can we do it without sin?"
>
> cited *Christian Missions in Nigeria*, p. 182, J. F. A. Ajayi, Longmans, 1965.

Reluctant to "sell the idea of empire" in terms of crude self interest the British ruling class tried to persuade the British people that they had a civilising mission (a white man's burden) and that as the natives were unfit to rule themselves the white man was a natural ruler. As it was the working class who had to fight and die for the Empire, it was necessary to convince them that it was worth the sacrifice.

The whole colonial apparatus of maintaining law and order was based on race. Until 1942 candidates for the Colonial Service were required to be of "pure European descent". This rule was abolished in West Africa in 1954 and in Central Africa in 1960. Those Africans who held positions were always described as "Africans holding European posts."

The attempts to hold on to the colonial Empire inevitably produced new assertions of the unfitness of the colonial peoples to rule themselves. Denied

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normal democratic means of expression the pressure for independence often erupted into demonstrations of hostility and even violence, always utilised as "proof" of inferiority. When the Kikuyu Land and Freedom Army, in the face of violence from the British Army and the white settlers, retreated into the forest and formed their armed units, the British press and radio maintained an unprecedented campaign of lies and distortions centred on alleged oath-taking and savage ritual, in their attempt to isolate the Kenyan people fighting for independence, from British public opinion. The deaths of white people were announced in banner headlines, discussed and emphasised wherever possible. There are very few people, even today, who know that in the Kenya Emergency, over a five-year period, 30 Europeans died, but 9,000 Africans were done to death by the British, and 90,000 detained in concentration camps. (Modern echoes of Lord Stanley's emphasis on the value of one British life compared with a whole African tribe.)

The acute economic problems, the weak state systems, the serious social difficulties arising from poverty, illiteracy, under-nourishment, all the heritage of colonialism, present newly independent Governments with enormous tasks in trying to reconstruct their societies. Pressures and direct interference from imperialist Governments and from major monopoly firms all contribute their element of complexity and instability. These difficulties are almost inevitably presented in the popular press as the result of an inherent incapacity to administer or to order their lives properly, now colonial rule has ended.

Policy of Colour

There is a tactit acceptance that policies towards "white" and "coloured" governments can differ.

It is still possible for the British Government to send troops to Antigua, Guyana, Aden, Mauritius, without much protest from the British people.

There are undoubtedly many Europeans who are prepared to accept United States aggression in Vietnam, because it is something being done by a white government to an Asian country. The British Government is able to refuse to bring down the rebel regime of Ian Smith in Rhodesia by force of arms because millions of British people do place the rights of 200,000 white people and the "rights" of British capitalism, higher than they place the rights of four million Africans.

The argument that much as we are "for" democratic rights for the African people in the Republic of South Africa we cannot "sacrifice" our economic interests to support them, is as staggering in its cynicism as in its political shortsightedness; but it gains acceptance in a society where there is not only hostility to the idea of race equality in the minds of a minority, but strong reservations in the minds of the millions of ordinary people who would regard themselves as firm upholders of democracy.

National Liberation and Anti-Racialism

The need to win solidarity for peoples struggling for national independence requires both arguments about peoples' rights in general to determine their own lives as nations, and specifically the rights of coloured nations, to have these rights too. In practice today, the struggle for independence links with the issue of the struggle against racialism. The concept of racial equality is closely intertwined with the general question of national independence for all peoples. If the working class of the imperialist countries are not won to accept the principle of racial equality then they can be isolated by their respective ruling classes from the national liberation struggles which challenge the power of the very monopolies which exploit the peoples of the whole of the non-socialist world.

The link between the struggle for national liberation, against racialism and for world peace, was emphasised at the recent Conference in Khartoum in support of the peoples of the Portuguese Colonies and Southern Africa, by Robert Resha. He presented a paper "Apartheid—The World Must Act", in which he declared:

> "The clash between the African peoples of Southern Africa and the white racist regimes which oppress and exploit them cannot be regarded as a purely local conflict. It is one of fundamental *international* interest and concern, affecting directly and indirectly, all peoples everywhere. The aggressive military axis of Pretoria, Salisbury and Lisbon, constitutes *a serious and direct threat to world peace*."

Resha then went on to show how the Republic of South Africa is no longer embattled behind its own frontiers, defending its own apartheid but is becoming itself an imperialist country, reaching out to extend its economic influence and political alliance in Africa and growing as a threat to the stability of the independent African states.

That same drive for capital accumulation which utilises racial segregation to maximise profits, also organises for the division and re-division of the world in its own interests, if necessary by war.

The racial policies of the major states of the world are becoming an important factor in their struggle for influence. This is important in the competition between the two world systems of imperialism and socialism.

For millions in the newly independent world, the United States, with all its technology and

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enormous material wealth, stands discredited because of its racial crisis. Twenty-two million black people in the United States are the underprivileged, denied even adequate social welfare and urban renewal on the plea of the heavy burden of the Vietnam war in which the brunt of the fighting and dying is taken by black American troops, conscripted and sent out to defend the free world from whose benefits they are excluded.

The degree to which the socialist states solve their national problems and are seen to continue a relentless ideological struggle against racialist ideas which hang over from the past, will also, in part, determine the attraction of socialism for the peoples of the newly independent states and the liberation movements.

Ideological Backlash

The ideology of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism, have been served up to generations of British people at school, in church and chapel, in the press, and yet only a minority, estimated at 10 per cent in a recent survey can be regarded as systematically racialist, with a further 17 per cent inclined to be prejudiced. The problem for us is to ensure that those who at present are tolerant inclined can be positively won for toleration, and the 17 per cent at least won to change their attitude more decisively.

In this battle for men's minds which is now going on such letters as the one in *The Times* from a Senior Lecturer in Education are a blow to progress. He argues that the view of the American Professor, Arthur Jansen that "the average intelligence of Negroes is about 15 points below that of whites and that, even when due allowance has been made for environmental disadvantages, the figure is likely to be 11 points", is scientifically proven and though he does not approve of the way Negroes are treated he thinks we should face up to "the facts".

Racial tensions in Britain are the outcome of a complex conjunction of factors such as the ideological conditioning of the British people over a long period, the relations between imperialism and the struggle for liberation, and the deep political crisis in which British capitalism finds itself at present.

The Introduction to *The British Road to Socialism* discusses "a deep-seated crisis of the whole of the economic and political and social system which adversely affects every aspect of life". The Programme emphasises that: "Power, economic, political, ideological, is concentrated in the hands of a small minority who use it to serve their own interests at the expense of the vast majority."

Ideas are a powerful weapon used by this minority to maintain itself and at present we are seeing an ideological backlash developing to help to preserve monopoly capitalism in Britain.

In 1964 the Labour Party was returned to office by the people who wanted new progressive policies. Today they see their hopes betrayed. Prices are rising, monopolies thrive with Government assistance, the expenditure on arms continues while social services, education, housing, and prospects of full employment are in jeopardy. Wages are under attack and the rights of the trade unions threatened.

The answer from the most advanced sections of the working class and young people has been to develop a militant fight back for a change in Labour's policy and some successes have been won. For other sections of traditional Labour voters, however, the outlook is uncertain and confused, and if we do not win them for the socialist alternative, there is the danger that they will move to the right and be influenced by the anti-democratic and racialist ideas which are being increasingly presented to them.

This ideological backlash has a number of major targets. There is the attempt to suggest that politics and politicians are useless. The working class is systematically denigrated and especially its most militant sections, the shop stewards and the trade unions. Youth are misrepresented and the propaganda against students conveniently combines an anti-youth and anti-intellectual campaign. There are attacks against education, both educational reform and new methods of teaching. Social services are under attack. It is in this general atmosphere that racialist propaganda also is growing and finding some response.

In an industrially powerful and wealthy country like ours the problems of housing shortages, inadequate social services and inequalities of education, call into question the very validity of the system itself. Our rulers are under intense pressures, there are enormous potential dangers for them and that is why racialism is particularly convenient for them now.

Racialism splitting and dividing workers, blaming a small, easily identifiable minority for acute social problems, diverts the people from fundamental solutions to their problems which they can achieve given unity. Race is set against race in the competition for scarce resources.

For Communists, therefore, the struggle against racialism is a revolutionary issue, linked with the challenge to the power of the ruling class and its policies at home and abroad. It is not for us a liberal "extra", something that we take on as a kind of political paternalism. It is a fundamental

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political aspect of our struggle for rights for all working people and for the unity of the working class, for democracy, social advances and socialism.

This is not to say that we require everybody who struggles against racialism to see the problem the way we do, before we will unite with them. On the contrary we need to work for much wider unity of all sections of the democratic movement to resist racialism and racial policies.

The Facts of the Position

The challenge to racialist ideas is peculiarly difficult in that it involves a challenge to irrational prejudices. This is why, frequently, violent outbursts are often the response to rational attempts to present facts and careful argumentation. We cannot fight unreason with unreason and it is necessary to master the facts of the position and present them as effectively as possible.

The Institute of Race Relations estimates that the coloured population including immigrants and British born, was about 1,113,000 at mid-1968. The breakdown is as follows:

Caribbean	Indian	Pakistani
454,100	223,600	119,000

"With the exception of the Pakistani group, the majority of children living in immigrant households were born in Britain. Over 80 per cent of children in Jamaican households and over 66 per cent of children in Indian households were born in Britain."

"Valerie Jackson has made the following estimates of British-born children of selected immigrant groups."

India, 43,200; Pakistan, 10,100; Ceylon, 3,200; Jamaica, 85,700; Rest of Caribbean, 50,000; British West Africa, 7,600.

Institute of Race Relations, Facts Paper *Colour and Immigration in the United Kingdom* 1969, pp. 2-3.

These immigrant workers come to Britain to find jobs, from countries where poverty and unemployment are acute. The economies of their countries are still largely tied to that of Britain. Because of their age structure they are generally between 20 and 40 years of age, they are economically more active than the general population. Consequently they make fewer demands on national assistance and social insurance funds. Generally they draw out less from the social services, except in the field of education and child care:

Cost per head of Health and Welfare Services for the General Population and the Immigrant Population (£ at 1961 prices).

	Total Population	Immigrants[1]
1961	18.5	17.8
1966	18.6	17.4
1981 (assuming some continued immigration)	19.0	16.8

Cost per head of Education and Child Care for the General Population and the Immigrant Population (£ at 1961 prices).

	Total Population	Immigrants[1]
1961-2	12.4	13.3
1966	12.1	13.9
1981	15.3	22.9

Cost per head of National Insurance and Assistance Benefits for the General Population and the Immigrant Population (£ at 1961 prices and 1961-2 rates of benefit, England and Wales).

	Total Population	Immigrants[1]
1961	31.2	19.2
1966	31.7	17.4
1981	33.5	18.1

Institute of Race Relations, op. cit., p. 25.

Like all other immigrants they travel to where the jobs are. Some live in the areas of new industries like the West Midlands and the South East, but many go to the areas where the native population is declining such as East Lancashire and West Yorkshire where important industries are not attracting population from other regions.

[1] The immigrant population here comprises people from the Caribbean, India, Pakistan, Africa, Malta and their children born here.

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Discrimination

Discrimination in housing has forced many of them to live in the crumbling areas of our cities in overcrowded conditions. Their children face the possibility of having to attend school in old buildings where staff problems are acute, where educational opportunities are less adequate and which they will leave to take up lower paid and less popular jobs. This cycle of under-privilege is not a mere projection of the future, it exists already for example in Liverpool which has had a coloured community for generations.

What has been the response at official Government level to the arrival of these immigrants from the Commonwealth?

The attitudes of both Tory and Labour Governments have been essentially the same. Both have given way, time after time, to the anti-immigration lobby; both have lost their nerve, afraid of what they imagine is an electorally explosive issue. If they leave the initiative to the racialists it will be, but leadership from the main Parties would be decisive the other way.

The Commonwealth Immigrants Acts, one passed by the Tories, the other by Labour, were concessions to racialists. Although Labour put up opposition to the first Act, in 1962, they never allowed it to lapse when they gained office, and they strengthened it with the notorious White Paper in 1965.

In 1968 the second Commonwealth Immigrants Act, introduced by the Labour Government this time, was rushed through in a matter of days to restrict the entry of holders of British passports coming from Kenya. It introduced the principle of second-class citizenship—some passports are more equal than others.

In response to the agitation on the injustices of the Immigration Act of 1962 the Wilson Committee was set up to investigate the desirability of an appeals system. The report, published in 1967, proposed provision for appeals and the bill is now going through Parliament, but with the proviso that now, all immigrants, including dependants must have an entry certificate and that those appealing against refusal of entry permits will not be allowed a hearing personally in Britain. The hearings will be abroad. The National Council for Civil Liberties and the Joint Committee for the Welfare of Immigrants have withdrawn consequently from the Home Office Advisory Committee on Welfare Services for Immigrants in protest. James Callaghan is not earning himself a reputation for liberalism at the Home Office.

At present the Statute Book carries discriminatory legislation, the Commonwealth Immigrants Acts, and laws which make it illegal to discriminate.

Race Relations Acts

In 1965 the Labour Government introduced the Race Relations Act which made it illegal to discriminate in places of public resort and to incite to race hatred. The second Race Relations Act, passed in 1968, forbids discrimination in employment, housing and credit facilities, and education.

Both Acts are weak and the procedure, especially in relation to employment, very cumbersome. There have been very few prosecutions for incitement to race hatred and it is urgently necessary to try to force the Attorney-General to indicate what he regards as incitement.

The Commonwealth Immigrant Acts have succeeded in reducing immigration from the Commonwealth virtually to a trickle.

The net intake of Commonwealth Immigrants with vouchers, excluding Australia, New Zealand and Canada, is as follows: 1965, 28,678; 1964, 13,888; 1965, 12,125; 1966, 5,141; 1967, 4,716; 1968, 4,353.

It is perhaps interesting to note here that the number of long-term visitors admitted in 1968 from Canada, New Zealand and Australia totalled 16,117. An average of 48,000 white aliens come in on work permits each year.

Numbers of dependants coming in have temporarily increased and this is the present issue on which racialists are agitating. The effect of the Commonwealth Immigrants Acts has been to convert temporary, migrant workers into settlers. As they found it increasingly difficult to move back and forth freely between Britain and their homes, coloured immigrants sent for their families to join them to settle here. At present a backlog of dependants is being worked through. The new regulations requiring entry permits will put even dependants' right of entry in jeopardy.

The Acts are blatantly discriminatory and we must continue to campaign for their repeal. They treat coloured immigrants less favourably than white.

The effects of the second Race Relations Act cannot yet be judged. It came into force in November 1968 and in the first six months of its operations there were 760 complaints made to the Race Relations Board, 366 of these were concerned with employment, only 18 were upheld and 189 were still under investigation. There were 394 general complaints of which 38 were upheld and 183 were under investigation. The first prosecution under the Act was heard in Leeds in June and August against a builder accused of refusing to sell a house to a coloured customer. The verdict, at the time of writing, has not been announced.

It is necessary to continue the campaign for the strengthening of the Act. The conciliation machinery

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is not adequately backed by a specific system of fines and punishments for the persistent discriminator.

On the eve of the passing of the Act, Enoch Powell made his speech which brought some dockers out in support of him. The incident reflected the weakness of the campaign for the new Act. No mass campaign had been developed. Those who had pressed for the Act were persuaded that they would succeed more easily if they went to work through personal contacts, working quietly behind the scenes. The quiet work did not silence Powell, and an opportunity was lost for building up mass support for the new law.

The National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants was set up under the provisions of the White Paper of 1965, under the Chairmanship of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The second Race Relations Act replaced it by the Community Relations Commission with Frank Cousins as Chairman.

Community Relations Commissions

For the NCCI the passing of the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act precipitated a crisis. The militants failed to persuade the majority actively to campaign against it, and they resigned. Immigrants lost confidence in the Committee.

There are two main approaches to the role of the CRC. One view is that it should concern itself mainly with assisting immigrants to settle in, and in training those who come into contact with them; the other view held by Communists, as well as many others, is that it should mainly work to change the attitudes and ideas of the white host community about race. This would, of course, require it to take up a much more militant attitude and to tangle in public controversy.

The Commission consists of nominated members with no provision for representatives from immigrant and labour movement organisations or bodies actively campaigning against racialism.

The local committees which receive assistance from the CRC vary enormously. Some are merely bodies of respectable citizens with not much skill or interest in the field of race relations while others are more democratic and representative capable of doing useful work. Many of these committees are now moving into difficulties since the election of large numbers of Tory majorities on local councils. There is also an attempt to pull local liaison officers into line by the CRC which wants to exert more control over them.

Official organisations are necessary, even useful, but they are not the organisations which will work at grass roots level, actively campaigning in the neighbourhoods and in the labour movement, fighting racialist ideas and the activities of racialists.

Struggle and Campaign

The building up of such local campaigning committees is now urgent and it is the responsibility of Communists, progressives and leading sections of the labour movement to take on the work. There are already many active committees which need further support so that they can extend their activities. There are other committees which have remained virtually the private property of their founders, who while anxious to work against racialism, tend to see this work as the preserve of convinced socialists and who reject the possibility of drawing in wider sections who may not share their political views, but who do want to develop the movement.

The local committees require skilled leadership, with immigrants themselves playing a leading role, and who will reach out to the widest sections of the people and especially to the labour movement.

The campaign to defeat racialism is not one on behalf of coloured people, it is a fight with them, generating unity in action between different sections of immigrants themselves and white people.

There are many immigrant organisations, based on nationality, religion, regions and social activities. Some of them have not yet come to recognise that they must play a leading part in the struggle, but as more members remain for long periods, as young people grow up, they will come to see the need for active participation in the struggle here, to defend themselves against racist provocations and for united action.

Labour Movement and Realism

The organised labour movement has not yet faced up squarely to the need to take a more active role in the anti-racialist campaign, and in defending coloured workers against discrimination. This will not come spontaneously but as the result of systematic activity. There are still strong traditions of craft exclusiveness and many workers feel insecure in the face of the immigrant workers moving into their industries. The way to ensure that immigrant labour will not be used to undermine wages and conditions is to win these new workers for the trade union movement, extending to them the protection of the working-class organisations and offering them the same rights and requiring the same obligations from them.

The labour movement is the stable, mass organisation, which could provide a powerful anchor in the struggle against racialism. There are sections, even of trade unionists who resent coloured workers and others who are actively hostile. The most powerful

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force for changing this would be the shop stewards, the factory committees, the trade union branch and full-time officials. They can take the movement from the present stage of resolutions against racialism to an active defence of coloured workers and a vigorous challenge to racialists.

The Communist Party too, must grasp in a more fundamental way why we fight racialism, and how necessary it is that this should be a characteristic part of the day-to-day work of all its branches. We are now at a crucial stage of the fight. Since Powell took on the role of leading the racialists it has become more acceptable to express race hatred and hostility. At the same time the movement to combat it is growing, but not quickly enough. In spite of centuries of ideological conditioning, in spite of deep crisis and problems, our people are not systematic racialists, but they have to be influenced and led actively to reject racialism and to work for mutual respect between people of different races and cultures.

Initiative seized now, vigorous campaigning now, can begin to swing the balance. If we delay, then misery, insecurity and enormous political problems will lie ahead of us retarding our advance to democracy and socialism.

Continued from page 310

rise to new progressive political groups which did not exist in the past.

Furthermore, important political and social mass movements are developing among the working class, the students, the intellectuals and other sections—movements which are of primary importance in one way or another, however they may turn out in the future. In Spanish politics, even though they are not, properly speaking, political parties, these movements are and will continue to be, with full autonomy, active elements in the struggle for democracy and socialism.

On that basis, step by step, there is being forged the alliance between the forces of labour and the forces of culture which corresponds to our strategic conception for the advance towards socialism in Spain. But at the present stage our party is ready to conclude a "pact for freedom" with all those political groups, no matter what their tendency is, which make up their minds to put an end to the Franco dictatorship.

Taking into account the present strength of socialism in the world, we conceive of socialism in Spain as a regime in which the political, cultural and individual liberties which the bourgeois revolution won in its struggle with feudal society, and which in their day—and even now in face of fascism—constituted a tremendous gain, will go on developing, becoming intertwined with the fundamental liberties which socialism and only socialism can ensure for man in putting an end to capitalist exploitation, to oppression and inequality.

Our vision of socialism regards the multi-party system, the collaboration of different parties socialist in tendency, as one of the characteristics derived from the special features of the Spanish revolution.

In setting ourselves this prospect, we Spanish communists are taking as our foundation the general principles of Marxism-Leninism and the experiences of our own political practice. It should be remembered that during our national revolutionary war a multi-party government, in which we collaborated with the Socialist Party and other democratic parties, brought about profound economic, political and social transformations which outlined the advance towards socialism and made Republican Spain the first People's Democracy in Europe.

This has left in position in our country's history the first milestone on the road that makes it possible to tackle, with a new outlook, not only the struggle for democracy but also the possibility of going over to socialism, relying on a broad coalition of working-class and democratic forces. We do not have any pretensions to impose our prospects for socialism as a compulsory model for anyone (which would incidentally be puerile), although we are convinced that socialism is the system which ought to ensure and will ensure the widest liberty as it grows stronger and fundamentally transforms people's lives.

All of which means that our party regards it as its mission to obtain power, in unity with other socialist and progressive forces in our country, in order to accomplish the revolution along paths and in forms which are in keeping with the Spain of today and the world of today.

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Discussion Contributions on:

British Youth in Revolt

Mike Prior

GEORGE BRIDGES has correctly brought out the important, perhaps crucial, role of the young in the present situation; he also indicated, though without sufficient emphasis, the seriously underdeveloped nature of the organised youth movement. This underdevelopment can be graphically illustrated by the October 1968 Vietnam demonstration; certainly a huge show of strength, 100,000 people, almost all young and marching with a militancy not seen for many years. Yet this demonstration was organised by an ad-hoc committee, since vanished, had no obvious carry through into continuing activity and no organisational impetus. This is the character of the youth movement, showing great feeling over certain issues, potentially a great force for change, but with no accepted leadership, continuity or organisation.

I believe that to analyse this it is necessary to understand the wide gaps that do exist between the "traditional left" (I am sorry for the phrase, looseness of political characterisation is one of our besetting weaknesses, but there seems no obvious alternative) and the kids at present becoming committed in the struggle.

The Time Gap

First the very real time gap. Understand what the experiences and the memories are. Not just that the 1930s, Spain, unemployment, "defending the Soviet Union" are not our experience, but that Korea and Suez and most of the 1950s are history tales. (Suez may be imperialism "dramatised to the British people" but it plays no part in the experience of the young). All the trauma of the cold war, Dulles, McCarthy, witch-hunts are merged and belong to you not to us. The first Aldermaston march happened when most of us read comics and not leaflets. Thus most of the events upon which the left hangs its beliefs mean very little to the youth.

The gulf of experience is very wide, and its made wider by a literal generation gap, the missing generation who were the dumb 1950s and whose absence (with honourable exceptions) has led to there being precious few links, no feeling of continuity; this means that a lot of political youth, particularly students, feel genuinely that they *are* new, that they are on their own and that all that has gone before is of no help.

Gulf of Suspicion

The other gulf that exists is the gulf of suspicion and mistrust. Put quite simply and brutally it is this; the young are saying "You have taken part in movements which have been betrayed sold-out, and compromised. You yourself have often kept quiet, compromised and refused to admit your mistakes. Above all you have failed. You have not helped the Vietnamese or the Cubans or our own poor one jot. Capitalism rules as oppressively as ever and you have made your own compromise with it and become comfortable in your compromise."

This may be wrong and dangerous, both personally and politically, but it is a commonplace feeling amongst the young; and let us admit that the young are often kept at arms length by the established left because sometimes these accusations have been justified. Has not rather a lot been swept under the carpet? When do we actually talk about mistakes, rather than talk about talking about them? Like all the questions about Stalinism and the effects both on the socialist countries and on our own party which we know have never been fully answered. These, perhaps small, dishonesties, loom large to a generation with Guevara as their hero and the threat of their own compromises as a goad.

If the feeling amongst the young is to be understood all this must be grasped—and the pain of grasping may be unavoidable—then a lot of the problems are clearer. Perhaps the most important difference is this; the established left attaches great weight to finding the correct answers to questions, the young are far more concerned with the way the answer is arrived at, and just what the questions are that need answering. It is felt that many of our policies are not obviously correct. Thus to those who have been involved for many years participation in elections is so obvious as to need no explanation. But it *does* need explanation, for it is an alternative, deliberately chosen, and not something handed down from Sinai. Why should

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we support left MPs when they so regularly sell out and fail at crucial moments? Just what is so good about centralised organisations? Why participate in union politics instead of solely working in unofficial bodies? And many others.

Arguments from the Roots

Our answers to these questions may be correct, but this is unimportant if we fail to realise why these questions are being asked now and if we dismiss those who ask them as Trotskyists—a label which means nothing at all in relation to the young, whatever it meant 20 years ago. We must go back and argue from the roots, not start halfway believing that the roots are obvious.

The youth movement (if it deserves the name) is chaotic and fragmented; it desperately needs the direction, organisation and sense of continuity that the established left can offer; but only if the established left accepts that it has not been wholly crowned with success and that it needs the young as desperately as they need it.

Marxism and Science

B. E. Leonard

IT is timely that the question of the relationship between dialectics and the natural sciences should be raised again for discussion so that it may be possible to reassess the situation unimpeded by the stresses that were a part of the Cold War. Dan Muir's opening to the discussion (*Marxism Today*, June 1969) was useful but I am not at all sure which side he is on. Is he of the view that "dialectics in its relation to modern scientific theory . . . has remained undeveloped for so long that it has slipped too far behind to be of use to the natural scientist" or does he, as is implied in the conclusion of his article, see dialectics as having a role to play now in the speculative border areas of the natural sciences? At the risk of being controversial, I would agree with the former view.

Laws of Nature and Dialectics

Maurice Cornforth in his article on "Some Questions about Laws of Dialectics" (*Marxism Today*, November 1965) puts the position very clearly: ". . . the laws of nature, as formulated in the sciences, accord with the laws of dialectics, or are 'dialectical'. But to secure any information at all about what to expect in concrete circumstances we must always investigate those circumstances and formulate the corresponding empirical laws, or laws of nature. The bare statement of laws of dialectics does not, by itself, help in the least". This seems to have been overlooked both in Dan Muir's article and by the subsequent contributor to the discussion, R. E. Press (*Marxism Today*, July 1969). Indeed, it would seem to me that the latter author makes no attempt to get to the root of the problem, namely the relevance or otherwise of dialectics to the natural sciences, but confines himself to the need to use examples from recent scientific research to illustrate how dialectical processes are occurring in nature, i.e. bring *Dialectics of Nature* up to date.

Nowhere do either of these contributors suggest how the application of the dialectical method might allow the natural scientist to make *constructive* predictions. It is not, by itself, of much value to know that any particular theory will be certainly superseded in future, which is as much as one can predict from dialectics at the present time. Thus it would seem that it is not primarily the function of dialectics to have such a role. And as dialectics cannot tell us anything useful about the concrete circumstances of an experimental situation, its value would therefore appear to be very limited. As Maurice Cornforth says in his article, already referred to:

> "The study of dialectics is thus concerned, not with tracing out the laws of concrete events, which is the business of empirical sciences, but rather with the most general categories with which all scientific thinking must operate—the categories of motion, connection, quantity, quality, polar opposition and so on."

In his article Dan Muir stressed the importance of Marxism to the social sciences in particular and it would seem that the other sciences could benefit by the rational organisation of society whereby the national basis may be laid for their optional development. The advantage of a socialist over a capitalist society, as far as the natural scientist is concerned, lies not so much in the mastery of dialectics which might enable the scientist in a socialist society to have a greater insight into his specialised subject, but rather in the security, support and material facilities which the socialist society should provide. Thus even

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Published by the Communist Party, 16 King Street, London, W.C.2, and printed by Farleigh Press Ltd. (T.U. all depts.), Watford, Herts.

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